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AND OTHER TALES.

BY HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

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The Ugly Duck,

And Other Tales.

BY

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

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Contents.

The Ugly Duck	7
Top and Ball	31
The Little Mermaid	37
The Storks	92
The Nightingale	104
The Rose Elf	127
Holger Danske	139
The Emperor Frederic Barbarossa	150
The Dying Child	158

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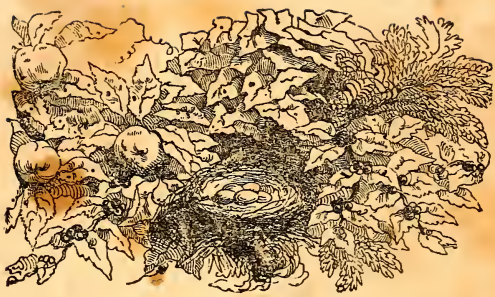
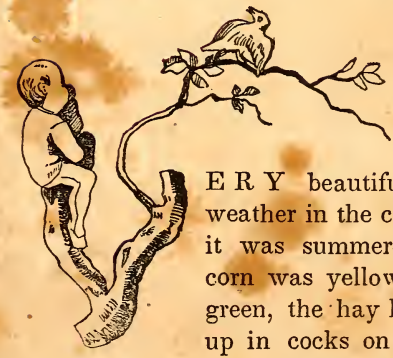


The Ugly Duck.



VERY beautiful was the weather in the country, for it was summer-time; the corn was yellow, the oats green, the hay lay heaped up in cocks on the green meadows, and the stork paraded about on

his long red legs, and talked Egyptian, for that was the language he had learnt from his mother.

All round the fields and meadows were great woods, and in the midst of the woods were deep lakes—yes, it was really most beautiful in the country!

And there stood an old manor-house right in the sunshine, with deep moats all round it, and on the walls great burdock-leaves were growing, that hung down into the water; they were so high that little children could stand under the largest of them. The place was as wild and unfrequented as the thickest part of the forest.

And here sat a duck on her nest;—she was to hatch her eggs and get a brood of ducklings; but it lasted so long, she was almost tired of it, important as it was; and she had, besides, few visitors. The other ducks preferred swimming about in the moats and ponds in the garden, to sitting with her on the green bank and chatting under the dock-leaves.

At last one egg cracked, and then ano-

ther: "Piep! piep!" they cried; all the eggs had grown alive, and one head popped out after the other. "Quack, quack," said she; and then the ducklings all broke open their shells, thrust out their heads as well as they were able, and peeped about under the green leaves. And their mother let them look as much as they liked; for green is good for the eyes.

"How immense the world is!" said the little ones; for the room they had now to move in was, to be sure, quite another playground to what it was when sitting in the egg-shell.

"Do you think that this is the whole world?" said their mother. "It extends far towards the other side of the garden, straight to the pastor's field: but there I have never been. You surely are all here!" And now she rose, though in so doing, in spite of all her care, her little scrambling progeny were regularly upset. "No, I have not all! The largest egg is lying there still. How long is this to last! I am really growing quite

tired of it." And then she sat on the nest again.

"Well, how are you getting on?" asked an old duck that came up to pay her friend a visit.

"It lasts so long with one egg," said the other; "it will never open. The shell must be too hard for the poor little thing to make a hole through it. But now you shall see the others. They are the nicest little ducklings that I have seen in all my life! They are all so like their father—the good-for-nothing fellow!—he has never been once to see me!"

"Let me look at the egg that will not open," said the old duck. "You may be sure it is a turkey's egg! I was deceived once in the same way myself: and I had plague and trouble enough with the young ones; for they are shy of water, let me tell you; I could not get them to go in. I called and scolded; but it was all of no use. Let me see the egg. Ah, truly!—that's a turkey's egg! Let it lie; and teach the other little ones to

"I will sit on it a little longer," said the Duck; "I have been sitting so long, that I may as well devote the rest of the harvest-time to it."

"You may do what you like, for me," said the old duck, as she waddled away. "The changeling will give her enough to do," thought she, as she went.

At last the great egg burst. "Piep, piep," said the little one, and tumbled out of the shell; but how large and ugly it was! The Duck looked at it: "That's a tremendous great creature, however," said she; "none of the others look like it. That can't be a turkey-chick, surely! Well, we'll soon find out. It shall go into the water, even if I am obliged to shove it in, we will see whether it is a real duck and can dive and swim properly."

The following day it was wonderfully fine weather, the sun shone so cheeringly on all the green leaves. So Mamma Duck went down to the moat with all her family at her heels, and, platsch! in she went into the water. "Quack! quack!" said she;

and plump into the water went one duckling after the other. Not one wanted to stay behind. The water went over their heads; but they came up again directly, and swam in the prettiest way imaginable: their feet moved of themselves in the water, and all were there; even the hideous grey one swam too.

"No, that's no turkey!" said the old Duck; "only look how prettily it uses its legs; how upright it holds itself!—that child is my own! In reality it's quite pretty, if one looks at it well.—Quack! quack! now come with me, I will take you into the world, and introduce you into the poultry-yard. But keep close to me, that no one may tread upon you; and take care of the cats."

And so they came into the poultry-yard. There was a terrible hurley-burley going on there just then; for two families were quarreling about the remains of an eel, which nobody but the cat got, after all.

"Behold, my children, such is the way of the world," said Mamma Duck, and

licked her bill; for she had a taste for fried eels too. "Now use your legs," said she; "pay attention, keep together, and bow to the old duck there yonder,—she is of higher rank than all the rest. She is of Spanish race; which accounts for her dignified appearance and noble manners—and, look! she has a red rag round her leg; that is something wonderfully beautiful, and the greatest distinction that a duck can have: it signifies that she is not to be given away, and that she may be known by men and animals. Turn out your toes! a well-bred duckling straddles his legs far apart, like his parents! Look—so! Now give your neck a graceful curve, as I do, and say 'Quack!'"

And they did as they were told; but the other ducks all round stared at them, and said quite aloud, "Now look, we are to have this tribe too, as if there were not enough of us already! we really could do very well without such a set as this; and only look, how ugly one is!—we wont suffer that one here." And immediately a saucy

drake flew at the little grey-green intruder, and bit him in the neck.

"Let it alone," said the mother; "it does no one any harm, and I will not have him ill-treated."

"Yes, but it is so large and strange-looking," replied the drake, "and therefore it shall be teased."

"Those are fine children that the mother has," said the old duck with the rag round her leg. "All handsome, except one: it has not turned out well. It is anything but perfect. I wish she could change it or hatch it over."

"That can't be done, your grace," said the mother; "besides, if it be not exactly pretty, it is a sweet child, and swims as well as one of the others; yes, even a little better. I think, in growing it will improve, or perhaps in time get less plump: it was long in the egg, and that's the reason it is a little awkward." And saying these words, she scratched the duckling in the nape of the neck, and smoothed down his thin green uniform where it was ruffled, and with her

bill stroked the whole little personage into order wherever she could. "Besides it's a drake," added she; "and therefore it does not matter so much. I think it will be strong, though, and fight its way through the world."

"The others are nice little things!" said the old Spanish lady-duck. "Now make yourself quite at home here; and should you find an eel's head, or anything very nice of that sort, why, you can just bring it to me."

And then they felt quite at home.

But the poor young duck, that had come last out of the shell and looked so ugly, was bitten, and pecked, and teased, by ducks and fowls. "It's so large!" said they all; and the turkey-cock, that had spurs on when he came into the world, and therefore fancied himself an emperor, strutted about like a ship under full sail, went straight up to it, gobbled, and got quite red. The poor little duck hardly knew where to go, or where to stand: it was so sorrowful, because it was so ugly and was the ridicule of the

whole poultry-yard, and this weighed heavy on his heart.

Thus passed the first day, and afterwards it grew worse and worse. The poor duck was hunted about by every one; even its brothers and sisters were cross to it, and always said, "I wish the cat would get you, you frightful creature!" and its mother in her sorrow for her suffering little one, said, "Would you were far from here!" And the ducks bit it, and the hens pecked at it, and the girl that fed the poultry kicked it with her foot.

So at last it made a desperate effort, and ran and flew over the hedge and out of the poultry-yard.

The little birds in the bushes started with affright. "That is because I am so ugly," thought the duck, and shut its eyes; but still ran on. At last it came to a great moor where wild ducks lived: here it lay the whole night, and was so tired and comfortless; while the full moon shone forth with such a smiling face that one might have thought she was laughing at the

merry-hearted frogs as they leaped from the turf into the water and from the water on to the turf again, dancing about like so many elves.

In the morning up flew the wild ducks, and saw their new comrade: "What a comical little fellow! Who are you?" asked they; and our little duck turned itself on every side, and bowed to them all as well as it could.

"But you are tremendously ugly!" said the wild ducks. "However, that is of no consequence to us, if you don't marry into our family." The poor thing! It certainly never thought of marrying; it only wanted permission to lie among the reeds, and to drink the waters of the marsh.

So it lay there two whole days; on the third came a couple of wild geese, or rather ganders: it was not long since they had crept out of the egg, and that was the reason they were so pert.

"Hark ye, comrade," said they; "you are so ugly that we like you right well. Will you come with us, and be a bird of

passage? Not far from here, on another moor, are some dear, sweet wild geese, as beautiful young ladies as ever said 'Gick-gack.' You might really do great things among them and make your fortune, you are so ugly!"

"Bang! bang!" was heard at the same moment, and both wild geese lay dead among the reeds, and the water was as red as blood: "bang! bang!" was heard again, and whole flocks of wild geese flew out of the rushes; and then the report was heard again.

There was a great shooting-excursion: the sportsmen lay all around the moor; indeed, some sat in the branches of the trees which spread over the heath; and the blue smoke floated like a cloud through the dark trees, and sank down to the very water; and the dogs spattered about in the marsh, —splash, splash! reeds and rushes were waving on all sides: it was a terrible fright for the poor duck! It turned its head to put it under its wing, when at the same moment a terribly large dog stood close be-

side it; his tongue hanging far out of his mouth, and his eyes sparkling horribly. He opened his jaws just opposite our duck, showed his sharp teeth, and—splash!—away he went without touching it.

"Well, Heaven be praised!" sighed the duck; "I am so ugly that even a dog won't eat me!"

And now it lay quite still, while the iron hail rattled among the rushes, and shot after shot was heard.

At last all was quiet; but the poor little thing did not yet dare to lift its head: it waited many hours before it looked round, and then hastened away from the moor as quickly as possible. It ran over the fields and meadows, and there was such a violent storm of wind that it could hardly get along.

Towards evening the duck reached a little hut; it was so wretched a place that it could not determine on which side it should fall down, and therefore it remained standing. The poor bird crept as well as it could into the straw that covered the side of the

hovel. The wind blustered so, and shook it so roughly, that it was obliged to sit on its tail to be able to oppose it, and it grew worse and worse. Just then it observed that the door had fallen off its hinges, and hung so much on one side that it could squeeze itself into the room; to be sure the hovel seemed to promise small store of comfort, but still it would be good shelter, after all, from the blustering weather; so in went the poor little duck.

Here dwelt an old woman with her tom-cat and her hen; and the cat, which she called her Mannikin, could put up his back and purr; yes, he could even make a cracking noise, but then you must stroke his fur the reverse way. The woman coaxingly called him her little son.

The hen had quite little short legs and therefore it was called Chickabiddy Shortshanks; she regularly laid good eggs, and the woman loved it as her own child. Peace and happiness were quite at home beneath the little tottering roof of straw, as they often are beneath many of the kind.

In the morning they remarked directly the new guest; and the tom-cat began to mew, and the hen to cackle.

"What's the matter?" asked the old woman; but she did not see well, and so she thought the young duckling was a fat duck that had lost its way.

"That's something worth catching!" said she. "Now I can get duck's eggs, if only it be no drake. We must try."

And so the duck was taken on trial for three weeks; but no eggs appeared.

Now the tom-cat was master in the house, and the hen was mistress: and they always said, "We and the world;" for they thought that they were the half of the world, and by far the better half into the bargain. The duck thought there might be two opinions on that matter; but the hen would not allow this.

"Can you lay eggs?" asked she.

"No."

"Well, then, hold your tongue."

And the tom-cat said, "Can you put up

your back, and purr, and make a cracking noise?"

"No."

"Well, then, you ought to have no opinion of your own, where sensible people are speaking."

And the duck sat sorrowfully in the corner, and was in a bad humor, with his two conceited companions, when suddenly it took it into its head to think about the fresh air and the sunshine; and it had such an inordinate longing to swim on the water, and to splash about in the yielding element, that it could not help, at last, telling the hen of it.

"What next, I wonder!" said the hen; "you have nothing to do, and so you sit brooding over such fancies! Lay eggs, or purr, and you'll forget them."

"But it is so delightful to swim on the water!" said the duck; "so delightful when it dashes over one's head, and one dives down to the very bottom!"

"Well, that must be a fine pleasure!" said the hen. "You are crazy, I think.

Ask the cat, who is the cleverest fellow I know, if he would like to swim on the water, or perhaps to dive; to say nothing of myself. Ask our mistress, the old lady, and there is no one in the world cleverer than she is; do you think that she would much like to swim on the water, and for the water to dash over her head?"

"You don't understand me," said the duck.

"Understand indeed! If we don't understand you, who should do so? I suppose you won't pretend to be cleverer than the tom-cat or our mistress, to say nothing of myself? Don't behave in that way, child; but be thankful for all the kindness that has been shown you. Have you not got into a warm room, and have you not the society of persons from whom something is to be learned? But you are a blockhead, and it is tiresome to have anything to do with you. You may believe what I say, I am well disposed towards you; I tell you what is disagreeable, and it is by that one recognizes one's true friends. Now, then, just take

the trouble to learn to purr or to make a cracking noise, or to lay eggs."

"I think I will go out into the wide world again," said the duckling.

"Well, then, go!" answered the hen.

And so the duck went, and began its wanderings anew. It left the hut without any reluctance, and hastened to the water that it had been pining for so long. It swam on the water, it dived down; but was disregarded by every animal on account of its ugliness.

The autumn now came on; the leaves in the green woods grew yellow and brown, the wind laid hold of them and danced them about; and it was cold up in the air, —the clouds, loaded with hail and snow, hung down heavily, and the crows sat on the fence and cried, "Caw, caw," from sheer cold; yes, it was enough to make one freeze to think of it;—and the poor duckling was certainly badly off.

One evening—the sun was setting most magnificently—there came a whole flock of large beautiful birds out of the bushes;

never had the duck seen any thing so beautiful! They were of a brilliant white, with long slender necks: they were swans. They uttered a strange note, spread their superb long wings, and flew away from the cold countries to warmer lands, across the sea, to unfrozen lakes. They mounted so high, so very high! the little ugly duck felt indescribably—it turned round and round in the water like a mill-wheel, stretched out its neck towards them, and uttered a cry so loud and strange that it almost frightened itself. Oh, the beautiful birds! the happy birds! it could not forget them; and when it could see them no longer, it dived down to the very bottom of the water; and when it came up again, it was quite beside itself. The duckling did not know what the birds were called, nor whither they flew; yet it loved them as it had never yet loved any thing. It did not envy them; it could not ever think of wishing such beauty for itself: why, it would have been quite contented if it had been but tolerated in the poultry-yard, the poor ugly animal!

And the winter was so cold! the duck was obliged to swim about on the water to keep it from freezing; but every night the opening in which it swam grew smaller and smaller. The coating of ice cracked with the frost; the duck was obliged to use its legs lustily to hinder the water from freezing entirely; but at last it was exhausted, it lay still faint and weary, and was frozen fast in the ice.

Early in the morning a peasant came by, who saw the duck, took pity on it, broke the ice in pieces with his wooden shoe, and carried it home to his wife.

Here it revived. The children wanted to play with it; but our duckling thought they wished to torment it, and in its fright, bounced right into the milk-pan,—so that the milk splashed about the room. The good woman screamed and wrung her hands; and then it flew into the tub where the butter was, and then into the meal-tub, and out again—but what a fright it looked now!

The woman shrieked, and tried to strike

it with the tongs; and the children hunted it about, one over the other, in order to catch it, and laughed and shouted. It was fine fun for them; but not so to the poor little bird, who now, instead of being grey, was as white as flour could make him. It was a good thing that the door was open, and out the duck rushed among the bushes in the freshly fallen snow:—there it lay as in a dream.

But it would be too sad to relate all the suffering and misery which it had to endure through the hard winter. It lay on the moor under the rushes. But when the sun began to shine again more warmly, when the larks sang, and the lovely spring was come, then, all at once, it spread out its wings and rose in the air. They made a rushing noise, louder than formerly, and bore it onwards more vigorously; and, before it was well aware of it, it found itself in a garden, where the apple-trees were in blossom, and where the syringas sent forth their fragrance, and their long green branches hung down in the meandering rivulets.

It was so beautiful; the freshness of spring was there: and just then three beautiful white swans came out of the thicket. They rustled their feathers, and swam on the water so lightly, oh, so very lightly! The duckling knew the superb creatures, and was seized with a strange feeling of sadness.

"To them will I fly," said it, "to the royal birds; they will kill me, because I, poor ugly creature, dare to approach them! But no matter! It is better to be killed by them than bitten by the ducks, pecked by the hens, kicked by the girl that feeds the chickens, and in winter to suffer so much." And it flew into the water, and swam towards the magnificent birds; they looked at him, and, with rustling plumes, sailed towards him.

"Kill me," said the poor creature, and bowed down its head to the water, and awaited death. But what did it see in the water! It saw beneath it its own likeness—but no longer that of an awkward grayish bird, ugly and displeasing—it was the figure of a swan!

It is of no consequence being born in a farm-yard, if only it is in a swan's egg.

The good creature felt quite elevated by all the cares and disappointments it had endured; now it knew how to prize the splendor which began to shine around it. And the large swans swam beside it, and stroked it with their bills.

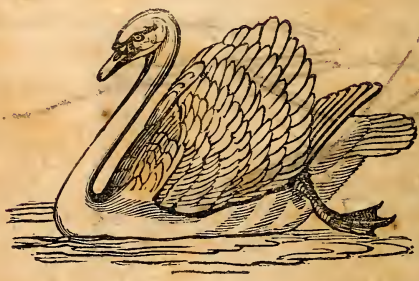
There were some little children running about in the garden; they threw bread into the water, and the youngest cried out:

"There is a new one!" and the other children shouted too, "Yes, a new one is come!"—and they clapped their hands and danced, and ran to tell their father and mother. And they threw bread and cake into the water, and every one said:

"The new one is the best! so young, and so beautiful!" And the old swans bowed their heads before it. Then the young one felt quite ashamed, and hid its head under its wing: it knew not what to do: it was too happy, but yet not proud, for a good heart is never proud.

It remembered how it had been persecuted

and derided, and now it heard all people say that it was the most beautiful of all beautiful birds. And the syringas bent down their branches to it in the water, and the sun shone so lovely and so warm. Then it shook its plumes, the slender neck was lifted up, and, from its very heart, it cried rejoicingly, "Never dreamed I of such happiness as this, in the days when I was the LITTLE UGLY DUCK!"



Top and Ball.

TOGETHER in the drawer, among other playthings, lay a Top and a Ball; and the Top said to the Ball, "Let us be betrothed, as we are lying here in the same drawer and are thrown so much together." But the Ball, that was made of morocco leather, and thought a great deal of herself, like a delicate young lady, would not hear any thing of the sort.

On the following day came the little boy to whom the toys belonged: he painted the

Top red and yellow, and drove a brass nail with a nice smooth head right into the middle of it: it looked quite splendid when the Top spun round.

"Only look at me," said he to the Ball. "What do you say now? Let us be betrothed, we are so fitted for each other: you can hop, and I can dance; happier than we two shall be, it would not be easy to find any body."

"Do you think so?" said the fine little Lady-Ball. "You probably don't know that my father and mother were morocco slippers, and that I have a piece of Spanish cork in my body."

"Yes, but I am made of mahogany," said the Top; "and I was turned by the Mayor with his own hand. He has a turning-lathe of his own, and he was very much amused while turning me."

"Can I depend on what you say?" said the Ball.

"May I never be whipped again if I am telling a story!" answered the Top.

"What you say is not amiss," said the

Ball; "but yet I cannot say yes; for I am as good as promised, and to such a dear little Swallow: as often as I fly up in the air, he puts his head out of his nest and says, 'Will you?' In my heart I have said Yes, and that is as good as being half promised. But this I assure you, forget you is what I shall never do."

"That will do me much good," said the Top; and henceforth they did not speak to each other.

The following day the ball was taken out, and the Top saw how it flew high up in the air like a bird; at last one could not see it any more: every time it came back again, but always made a bound when it touched the earth, and that was occasioned either by love, or by the cork which it had in its body. The ninth time it stayed away, and did not come again: the boy searched and searched, but it was gone.

"I know very well where she is," sighed the Top; "she is in the Swallow's nest, celebrating her wedding."

The more the Top thought about it, the

lovelier seemed the Ball to him: that he could not have her, made his love but the hotter; that another should be preferred—it was that which he could not forget! And the Top danced and hummed, but he was always thinking of the dear Ball, that seemed to him lovelier and lovelier the more he thought of her. Thus passed many years; and so then it was an old love.

The Top was no longer young; but one day, all of a sudden, he was entirely gilded over; never had he looked so beautiful, he was now a golden Top, and spun about, humming all the time, till the whole place quite rattled. Yes, that was a sight! But all at once he jumped too high, and—he was gone! They searched and searched, even in the cellar: he was no where to be found.—

Where was he?

He had sprung into a butt, full of all sorts of rubbish, cabbage-stalks, dust and parings, and of what fell from the gutter under the roof.

"A nice place this! I shall soon lose all

my fine gilding here! and what beggarly company have I fallen among!" And saying this, he looked askance at a long cabbage-stalk that lay shockingly near, and at a strange-looking round thing, almost like an apple: but it was no apple—it was an old ball that had lain many years in the gutter, and was thoroughly soaked with water.

"Well! thank heaven! at last one sees one's equals,—some one with whom I can exchange a word," said the Ball, and looked at the golden Top. "In reality I am of morocco, sewn together by maiden's hands, and have a cork in my body: though no one would imagine it from my present appearance. I was on the point of being married to a Swallow; but I fell into the gutter, and have lain here five years, and am now wet through. That's a long time for a maiden lady, I can tell you!"

But the Top gave no reply. He thought of his old love; and the more he heard, the more certain was he that it was she.

Just at this moment the housemaid came

to clear out the butt. "Holloa! here is the gold Top!" said she.

And the Top was brought into the play-room again, and was used and admired as before. But one heard nothing more of the Ball. And the Top never spoke of his former love: that passes by, when the affianced one has lain five years in the gutter of a roof; yes, one does not recognize her when one meets her again in a dust-hole.

The Little Mermaid.

FAR, far away, out in the open sea, the water is as blue as the most beautiful corn-flowers, and as clear as the purest crystal; but it is very deep—deeper than the longest cable can reach. Many a church-steeple would have to be piled one on the other before you could reach from the bottom of the sea to the surface; and here, in these depths, dwell the Mer-people.

Now you must not fancy that there is no-

thing down there but white sand; far from it. Trees and plants of wondrous beauty grow there, whose stems and leaves are so pliable that they move to and fro at the slightest motion of the water, as though they were living creatures. Large and small sea-fishes glide through the branches, as the birds fly about in the air and among the trees on land with us.

At the spot where the sea is deepest lies the palace of the Ocean-King. The walls of the palace are of coral, and the high pointed windows of amber, the roof is of sea-shells cunningly joined together, that open and shut with the swell of the waves, which has a charming effect; for in every shell shining pearls are lying, one alone of which would be a costly jewel for the crown of an earthly monarch.

The Ocean-King who lived in this palace, had been a widower many years; but his old mother managed his household affairs for him. She was a clever woman, but she was very proud of her lineage, and on that account she wore twelve oysters on her tail,

while other Mermaids, even those of distinction, could only have six. In everything besides she merited unreserved praise, particularly on account of the great affection she bore her grand-daughters, the little Ocean-Princesses. They were six particularly beautiful children; the youngest Princess, however, was the loveliest of all the sisters. Her complexion was as fine and delicate as a rose-leaf, her eyes as blue as the deepest sea; but, like all Mermaids, she had no feet; her body ending in a tail like that of a fish.

The whole day long the children were allowed to play in the spacious halls of the palace, where beautiful flowers grew out of the walls on all sides around them. When the large amber windows were opened, great fishes swam into these apartments; just as the swallows fly into our rooms, when we leave the doors open. But the fishes were bolder than our swallows are; they swam right up to the little Princesses, ate out of their hands, followed them about

the halls, and allowed themselves to be caressed.

In front of the palace was a large garden with crimson and dark-blue trees, whose fruits sparkled with gold; but the flowers of the garden were like a burning sun. The mould there was of the finest sand, but of a violet color, something like the flame of brimstone, and over the whole was spread a wondrous blue, so that one might have fancied oneself high up in the air, with the heavens above and below, instead of being at the very bottom of the sea. When the water was tranquil, one could see the sun, which looked then like a purple flower, out of whose chalice the light of the world was streaming.

Each of the little Princesses had her own flower-bed in the garden, in which she could plant and sow as she liked. One laid hers out in the form of a whale, another liked that of a mermaid better; but the youngest made hers quite round, like the sun, and planted in it only flowers that were red, to resemble it in color too. She was indeed an

extraordinary child, very quiet and thoughtful. While her sisters were adorning themselves with all sorts of things as ornaments, which they had got from a ship that had been wrecked, she asked for the beautiful white boy only, a marble figure which had been found in the vessel. She placed the statue in her garden, and planted a red weeping willow beside it, which grew right pleasantly; and its long branches hung down to the blue ground, on which the flitting shadows played in violet tints, as though the roots and the tops of the boughs played with and kissed each other.

Nothing delighted the little Princess so much as to hear of the world inhabited by man, that was up above the waters. Her old grandmother was obliged to tell all that she knew about ships and towns, men and land-animals; and she was particularly delighted to hear that the flowers on the earth had a sweet odor, which is not the case with the flowers of the ocean; to learn that the woods there were green, and that the fishes that fluttered about in their branches

were beautiful, and sing aloud. It was the birds she meant; her grandmother called them fishes, because her grand-daughters, who had never seen a bird, would otherwise not have understood her.

"When you have reached your fifteenth year," continued the old lady, "you may rise up to the surface of the sea, sit on the rocks in the moonlight, and see the large ships sail by, and become acquainted with men and cities."

The following year the eldest sister attained this happy age; but as to her sisters, unfortunately one was always a year younger than the other, and the youngest therefore had to wait five whole years before the glad moment should come for her to rise to the surface of the ocean, and behold how the upper world did look. But each promised the other to tell what she had seen, and what she thought most beautiful, as soon as the first day of her coming of age should arrive; for really their grandmother told them so very little, and there were so many things that they wanted to

know about; besides what she did tell them, only excited their curiosity to see the wonders with their own eyes.

But none of the sisters felt so lively a longing for this day of liberation from childish restraint as the youngest; she who must wait longest, and who always moved about so quietly and absorbed in thought. Many a night did she stand at the open window, and look upwards through the clear blue water, whilst the fishes were splashing and playing around her. She could see the sun and the moon, of course in dimmed brightness only; but to her the orbs seemed larger than they do to the dwellers upon earth. If a shadow concealed them, then she knew that it was either a whale or a passing ship with human beings upon it, who certainly little thought that, far below them, a little ocean-maiden stretched her white hands upwards towards the keel of their ship, with an ardent longing to be with them.

The day had now arrived when the eldest Princess had reached her fifteenth

year, and was therefore allowed to rise to the surface of the sea.

At her return she had a thousand things to relate; but yet her greatest enjoyment had been to sit on a sand-bank in the moonlight, and to see the large city lying on the coast, where lights like stars were shining, music sounding, and where the noise and hum of carriages and men might be heard afar. Then, too, to behold the high church-towers, and to hear the chime of the bells,—it was for these very things she felt the greatest longing, just because they were beyond her reach.

How attentively did her youngest sister listen to these words! And when she next stood by night at her open window, and looked upwards through the blue flood, she thought so intensely of the great noisy city, that she fancied she could hear the sound of the church-bells.

The following year the next sister was allowed to rise to the surface, and swim whither she pleased. She rose to the top of the water just as the sun was going down;

and this sight so delighted her, that she said, of all she had seen above the sea, this was the most magnificent.

"The whole heaven was like gold," said she, "and the beauty of the clouds it is out of my power to describe: now red, now violet, on they sailed above me; but still more swiftly than they, a flock of white swans flew over the water at the very spot where the sun was descending. I looked after them, but the sun disappeared, and the rosy light gradually died away on the surface of the ocean, and on the edges of the clouds."

It was now the third sister's turn to rise and visit the upper world. She was the most beautiful and the boldest of the three, and therefore she swam up a river that fell into the sea. Here she saw on the banks green hills with grape-vines, castles and houses that rose up from among the woods; she heard the host of birds singing; and the sun shone so warm, that she was often obliged to dive beneath the water to cool her burning face. In a small bay she found

a whole company of little children—the children of mortals who dwell upon the earth—who were bathing, and who jumped about naked and splashed in the water. She wished to join in their sport; but the children fled frightened to the land, and a little black animal barked so dreadfully at her, that at last she grew afraid, and swam back again to the sea. But she could not forget the sight of the green woods, the leafy hills, and of the nice little children who swam about in the water although they had no fins.

The fourth sister was not so bold; she remained in the open sea, and when she came back to her ocean-palace, related that there it was more beautiful than any where else, for one could see miles around one, while the sky, like a large bell, hung over the waves. She had seen ships too, but only so far off that they seemed to be sea-gulls; while sprightly dolphins sported on the water, and whales spouted high jets into the air that looked like a thousand fountains.

The following year the fifth sister was fifteen. Her birthday happened at a different season—it was in winter; and so she saw what the others had not seen when she went up for the first time. The sea had become green, and icebergs were swimming about its surface. These looked like pearls, she said, but were higher than the church-towers on the land. She had seated herself on one of these swimming ice-pearls, and let the wind play with her long hair; but every ship had quickly hoisted its sails, and had hastened frightened away. The same evening the sky was covered with clouds, and while the huge blocks of ice sank and rose again out of the sea, and shone in the red glare, flashes of lightning, burst forth from the clouds, and the thunder rolled on peal after peal. Then on every ship the sails were furled, and fear and terror reigned on board. But the Princess remained quietly seated on her icy rock, and watched unconcernedly the blue zig-zag of the lightning flashing in vivid light through the clouds rushing into the sea.

The first time that each of these sisters rose from the sea, she was astonished and enchanted at the sight of the many new and beautiful objects which she had seen in the upper world. But when now, as grown-up maidens, they had permission to go up as often as they liked, it soon lost the charm of novelty, and it was not long before their own home seemed much more delightful than the upper world; for here all seemed congenial.

Many an evening did the five sisters, arm-in-arm, rise to the surface of the sea. Their voices were much sweeter than that of any mortal; and when a storm was approaching they swam before the ships and sang, oh, so beautifully! of the joy it was to dwell at the bottom of the ocean, and begged the mariners not to be afraid, but to come down to them.

The sailors, however, did not understand their words; they took the song for the whistling of the blast, and so lost the sight of the beauties of the deep; for when a ship went down, the men on board were drown-

ed, and arrived dead at the palace of the Ocean-King.

When the sisters thus swam in the evening hours on the tops of the waves, the youngest remained quite alone in her father's palace, looking after them; and at such times she felt as though she should weep. But the Mermaids have no tears, and therefore suffer immeasurably more in their sorrow than men, for sorrow melts men with tears.

"Oh, were I but fifteen years old!" sighed she. "I know, for certain, that I should love the upper world, and the men that live upon it, very dearly!"

At length the much-desired fifteenth year was attained!

"Now, then, it is your turn, and we are quit of you," said the old grandmother. "Come here, that I may dress you like your sisters."

So saying, she placed a royal wreath of white lilies in her hair, whose every petal was the half of a pearl, and the old lady ordered eight large oysters to hang

themselves to the tail of the Princess, as a sign of her high descent.

"But that hurts me so!" said the little Princess.

"Little discomforts are not to be minded, if we wish to look well," answered the grandmother.

She would so gladly have cast aside all her finery, and taken off the heavy wreath, for her red flowers out of the little garden became her much better; but she dared not do so before the old lady.

"Adieu," said she, and rose out of the sea as light and as beautiful as an air-bubble in the water.

The sun had just left the horizon as she, for the first time in her life, appeared on the surface of the ocean; but the clouds still shone golden and rose-colored, the evening star gleamed in the pale red sky, the air was mild and refreshing, and the sea as smooth as a mirror.

A large ship with three masts lay on the tranquil waters; a single sail was hoisted, for not a breath of air was perceptible, and

the sailors were sitting on the yards or in the rigging. Music and song sounded from on board; and when it was dark, hundreds of lamps suddenly glittered on the ship, and it looked as if the flags of every nation were fluttering in the air.

The little Mermaid swam to the cabin-windows, where, each time the waves lifted her on high, she was able to see through the clear glass panes. Here she saw many gaily-dressed persons; but the handsomest of all was the young Prince with the large dark eyes. He was certainly not more than sixteen. It was his birth-day that was being kept, on which account were all these festivities. The seamen danced on the deck; and when the young Prince appeared among them, hundreds of rockets were sent up into the air, turning the night into bright day, and frightening the little Mermaid so much that she plunged beneath the water for a minute or two. But she soon peeped out of the water again, and it now seemed as if all the stars of heaven were falling around her. Such a rain of fire had she

never seen: of such arts, known but to men, she had never even dreamed. Large suns turned round, glowing fishes swam in the air, and the whole spectacle was reflected in the clear surface of the sea. On the ship itself it was so light, that one could distinguish the smallest object, and see all the persons distinctly—oh, how handsome the young Prince was! To many of the people he gave his hand, and joked and laughed; while the music sounded pleasantly in the silence of the night.

It was already late; however, the little Princess could not tear herself away from the sight of the ship and the handsome Prince. She remained looking through the cabin window, rocked to and fro by the waves. But there was a hissing or roaring in the depths of the ocean, while the Princess still swam on the surface in order to see the Prince. The ship began to move more quickly, the sails were hoisted, the waves tossed, black cloulds gathered over the sky, and the noise of distant thunder was heard. The sailors perceived that a

storm was coming on, so they again furled the sails. Already the huge vessel rocked on the heaving sea like a mere skiff, and the waves, towering on high like black mountains, broke over it: but the good ship glided downwards in the hollow of the sea like a swan, and appeared again immediately riding on the crest of the waves now lashed into foam.

To the little Mermaid this appeared very amusing: but not so to the sailors on board. The vessel creaked and groaned, and her thick ribs bent under the heavy blows of the waves against her side, while the water rushed in. For a moment the ship reeled; the mainmast snapped as though it had been a reed: she capsized and filled. Now the little Mermaid comprehended that the people on board were in danger; for she herself was obliged to take care of the spars and timbers that had been torn away from the ship, and were now floating about in all directions on the waves.

But at this moment it became so dark that she could not distinguish anything:

though when the dreadful lightning played, it was so light that she recognized everybody on the wreck. Her eyes sought the young Prince just at the moment when the ship went to pieces and sank. At first she felt so glad, thinking that the Prince would now come to her; but she immediately recollected that men cannot live in the water, and that therefore the Prince would only reach her palace as a corpse. Die? no, that he should not! So she swam through the pieces of wreck that the waves were driving about in all directions, forgetful of her own danger, dived and rose again, till at last she reached the spot where the Prince, almost exhausted, but just kept himself with difficulty above water. His eyes were already closing, and he would inevitably have been drowned if the little Mermaid had not come to his rescue. But she seized hold of him, and, while she was driving along by the waves, bore him above the water

Towards morning the storm abated: but not a trace of the ship was to be seen. The

sun rose as red as fire from the sea. Its first rays seemed to color the Prince's cheeks, but his eyes were still shut. The young Mermaid kissed his high forehead, and put back his wet hair from his face. While in this state he resembled the marble figure down in her garden: she kissed him once more, and wished most fervently that he might revive, and that his eyes might open and look once upon her.

Now she beheld the firm land with its high mountains, on which the white snow was shining. A green wood stretched along the coast, and fronting it lay a chapel or a cloister; she could not well distinguish which. Citrons and oranges displayed themselves in the garden, and toward the gates was an avenue of tall palm-trees. The sea formed here a small bay, in which the water was quite still, but very deep; and only under the rocks on the shore the fine sand that had been washed up formed a firm ground. Hither the Mermaid swam with the seemingly dead Prince, laid him on the warm sand, and took care to place

his head the higher, and to turn his face towards the sun, that its warmth might call back his life.

In the large white building that stood before her, the bells began to sound, and many young maidens came out to walk in the garden. The little Princess withdrew from the shore, hid herself behind some pieces of rock, covered her head and hair with the froth of the sea in order that her face might not be seen, and watched carefully to see who would approach the Prince.

It was not long before one of the young girls went towards him. She seemed quite terrified at the sight of the lifeless Prince; but, soon recovering herself, she ran back to call her sisters. The little Mermaid saw too that the Prince revived, and smiled kindly and joyfully on all who surrounded him; but on her he cast no look, for he did not know that it was to her he owed his preservation. And when the Prince was taken from the ground where she had laid him, and carried into the large building, she grew so sad, that she immediately plunged

beneath the water and returned sorrowful to her father's palace.

If she had been formerly thoughtful and quiet, she was henceforward still more so. Her sisters asked her what she had seen in the world above, on the first day of her majority; but she gave no answer.

She often rose of an evening near the shore where she had left the prince; she saw how the fruits of the garden ripened and were gathered; she saw how the snow on the high mountains vanished; but the Prince she could never see; and she always, therefore, returned to her submarine dwelling melancholy and sad.

Here it was her only consolation to sit in the little garden, and to embrace the little statue that resembled the handsome Prince; but she tended her flowers no longer; they grew up wild, covered the paths, and twined their long stalks and leaves in such rank luxuriance round the branches of the trees, that the whole garden was turned into a gloomy bower.

At last being no longer able to conceal her

sorrow, she disclosed her secret to one of her sisters. The other sisters now learned the secret immediately; but only they and some few of their friends. Among the latter was one who recollected the Prince; she, too, had been a witness of the festivities on board; she knew also in what country he was to be found, and the name of his sovereign.

"Come, little sister!" said the other Princesses, and, twining their arms together, they rose in a line out of the sea just in front of the castle of the Prince.

This castle was built of pale yellow shining stones, and furnished with a flight of steps of white marble, the last of which reached to the very margin of the sea. Over the roof was spread a magnificent gilded dome, and between the columns which surrounded the castle stood white marble figures resembling living men. Through the clear glass of the high windows one could see into the splendid halls, where the silken curtains were looped up in festoons, and all the walls decorated with the finest

pictures; so that the sight of this gorgeous dwelling was a real delight for the little Mermaid. In the middle of one of the halls of state a jet of water made a splashing noise, sending up its stream to the glass cupola above; and through it the sun shone on the water, and on the sweet plants and flowers which grew around it.

Now, then, the little Princess knew where her dear Prince lived; and from this hour she showed herself nearly every evening, and many a night on the water. She often approached the land nearer than her sisters had ventured to do; she even swam up the whole length of the narrow canal that led below the marble balcony, whose long shadow was reflected in the water. Here, then, she tarried to gaze at the young Prince, who imagined himself alone in the clear moonlight.

She often saw him, too, on the waters in his splendid barge, over which the many gay flags were flying. She listened from among the green rushes which grew on the banks, to hear his voice; and if by chance

a light breeze caught her silver veil, and the fluttering was observed by those in the Prince's boat, they thought it was only a swan stretching out its long white wings over the water.

Many a night when the fishermen were at their occupation by torchlight, she heard them relating much good of the Prince, and the noble actions he had performed. Then she rejoiced greatly at having saved his life, when, half-dead, he was struggling with the waves; and she remembered how his head had rested on her shoulder, and how she had kissed him when he knew nothing of it, nor even dreamed of such a thing.

Dearer and dearer did the human race become to her, and more and more did she wish to belong to them. Their world seemed to her much larger than that of the dwellers in the sea; for they could fly away in their ships over the ocean, climb to the summits of the highest mountains, that reached the clouds of heaven; and their countries, bordered by woods and decked with plea-

sant fields, extended themselves much farther than the eye of a Mermaid could reach.

There were so many things about which she would have gladly asked for information; but her sisters could give her no satisfactory answers. So she was obliged to have recourse to the old Queen-mother, who was well acquainted with the upper-world, which she used to call "the country above the sea."

"Does the human race live for ever if the people are not drowned?" asked she once of her grandmother. "Do they never die, as we do who live at the bottom of the sea?"

"Yes," replied the old lady, "they must die as well as we; and besides, their lifetime is much shorter than ours. We can live to be three hundred years of age; but then when we die we become but foam on the sea, and have not even a grave here below among those we love. We have no immortal soul, we do not live again, but are like reeds that, once cut, can never more grow green. But men, on the contrary, have a

soul that still lives on when their bodies are turned to earth, and which soars upward to the shining stars in heaven. As we rise out of the water to see the countries of men, so do they rise to unknown fair abodes in the skies, which our eyes are not permitted to behold."

"Why do we not have immortal souls?" asked the little Mermaid. "I would give all my three hundred years to be a human creature only for a day, and then to be allowed to dwell forever in the heavenly world."

"You must not think of such a thing," answered her old grandmother. "Why, we are much better off than men, and are far happier."

"Then I must die, and be drifted about like foam upon the waves! I shall no longer hear the sweet murmur of the sea, nor behold the beautiful flowers, nor the red sun! —And is there nothing I can do, grandmother, by which I may obtain an immortal soul?"

"No," answered she. "When only a

mortal loveth thee so much that thou art more to him than father and mother; when every thought and all his love is concentrated in thee, and he gives his hand to the priest to be laid in thine with the promise of everlasting constancy,—then only canst thou become immortal; for then would his soul dissolve in thine, and thou wouldst be made a partaker of human happiness. But that can never happen! What in our eyes is the handsomest part of our bodies, the fish's tail is considered frightful by the inhabitants of earth, because, forsooth, they know no better. According to their notions, one must have two awkward props to one's body, 'legs,' as they call them, in order to look well!"

Then the little Mermaid sighed, and looked sorrowfully at the scaly part of her otherwise beautiful body.

"Let us be happy!" continued the old lady, "We have three hundred years to skip and swim about, and that is, after all, a pretty good time for enjoyment; when it is over, I do not doubt but that our sleep will

be a quiet one. To-night there is a ball at court."

And a splendor was there, such as one never sees on earth. The walls of the spacious ball-room were of the thickest, yet clearest crystal; many hundred colossal grass-green and rose-colored shells stood in rows at the sides; and in these blue flames were burning, that not only illumined the whole hall, but, shining through the crystal walls, lighted up the sea far around. From the hall, therefore, could be seen more brilliant than ever, innumerable large and small fishes of the ocean, some with scales of gold and silver, and some quite red and purple.

Through the middle of the large ball-room flowed a clear broad stream, and on it danced the Mermen and the Mermaids to the melody of their own sweet voices, voices far sweeter than those of the dwellers upon earth. The little Princess sang most beautifully of all; and the others applauded and clapped their hands. This pleased her very much, although she well knew that neither in the sea nor on the land was to be found a

being who possessed a more charming voice than hers.

But soon all her thoughts were occupied with the world above her: she could not forget the handsome Prince, and her grief at not possessing an immortal soul was very great. She therefore stole away from her father's house; and while all within was merriment and joy, she sat absorbed in thought, and hidden under the thick foliage in her little neglected garden.

On a sudden she heard the sound of horns, echoing from above through the water, far away in the distance; and she thought, "He is about to depart for the chase,—he whom I love more than my father and mother, who occupies my thoughts incessantly, and in whose hand I would so gladly lay the happiness of my life! All, all, will I hazard to win him and an immortal soul! While my sisters are dancing in the palace, I will go to the Witch of the Sea, whom it is true I always dreaded, but who, after all, is perhaps the only one who can counsel and assist me."

The little Mermaid now left the garden, and went to the roaring Maelstrom, beyond which the sorceress dwelt. She had never been that way before: no flower grew along the path, no sea-weed, and nothing but the bare, grey, sandy ground extended itself to the Maelstrom, in which the water whirled like rushing mill-wheels, and hurled all that it seized on down into the abyss. She would have to pass through the middle of this crushing whirlpool, to arrive at the territory of the Ocean-Witch; and here, again, a long part of the way led through boiling ooze, called by the sorceress her moor-ground.

Behind this waste lay her house, in a wood of a peculiar sort, and a strange abode it was. All the trees and bushes consisted of polypi, hundred-headed, and looking like serpents shooting up out of the earth. The branches were long shiny arms, with fingers of supple worms, that, from the roots to the very highest top, unceasingly stretched out in every direction. What they caught in this manner they held so tight in their

snake-like folds, that it could never get loose again.

The little Mermaid stood quite horrified before this frightful wood; her heart palpitated with fear, and she had nearly turned back, her mission unaccomplished, when her thoughts fell on the Prince and the immortal soul, and inspired her with new strength. She therefore bound up her long flying hair, that the polypi might not seize it and drag her towards them, folded her arms crosswise over her bosom, and then, more swiftly than a fish darts through the water, she flew by the hideous polypi, who now in vain stretched out their greedy arms towards her. But she saw how each tree had seized something, and a thousand little arms held it as fast as though it were enlocked by hands of iron. Mortals who had been lost at sea, and had sunk in the abyss, grinned as white skeletons from out the arms of these polypi; rudders, chests, skeletons of land-animals, were held fast in their embrace, and even a little Mermaid was there that they had dragged into their clutches

and strangled, which, for the poor Princess, already trembling with fear, must have been a dreadful sight.

After she had passed safely through the fearful wood, she reached a slimy place where large fat sea-snails were crawling about; and in the middle of this place stood a house built of the bones of human beings who had been lost at sea. Here sat the Witch, caressing a toad in the same manner as we often see persons feeding a canary with sugar. The disgusting fat snails she called her chickens, and allowed them to sit upon her spongy shoulders and creep about her skinny neck.

"I know well what you would ask of me," said she to the little Princess; "your intention is foolish enough, but, nevertheless, your wish shall be fulfilled, my pretty maiden, though it is sure to bring misfortune on you. You would like to get rid of your tail, and to have in its place two stilts such as men use, that the young Prince may fall in love with you, and so you may get an immortal soul."

While the Witch of the Sea said this she laughed with all her might, and so frightfully, that the pet toad and the snails tumbled down and rolled about upon the ground.

"You come just at the right time," continued shē. "If you had come to-morrow after the sun had risen, I should have been unable to help you until a year's end. I will prepare you a potion, with which you must swim to the land; you must then seat yourself on the shore, and drink it. Your fish's tail will immediately fall off, and shrivel up into the things which men call 'legs;' but this transformation is very painful, and you will feel the while as if a sharp instrument were thrust through your whole body. All who then behold you will say you are the most beautiful mortal they have ever seen; you will retain your gliding gait, and no dancer, be she ever so light, will move with so elastic a step; but at every motion you will suffer intolerable pain; you will feel as though you were treading on pointed blades and your blood flowing from

the wounds. If you will subject yourself to all these torments, I will grant your request."

"Yes, I will!" answered the little Princess, with trembling voice; for she thought of her beloved Prince, and of the acquirement of an immortal soul.

"But remember," said the Witch, "that you can never be a mermaid again, when you have once taken upon yourself the human form; you will never be able to descend to your sisters and to your paternal dwelling; and should you not gain the Prince's love in such degree that, for your sake, he forgetteth father and mother, that all his thoughts and all his joy be centered in you, and a priest join your hands together that you become man and wife,—without this you will never obtain the immortality you seek. The morning after he is united to another will be the day of your death; your heart will then break for grief, and you will pass away and be changed into the foam on the waves of the sea."

"I still will venture!" continued the little Mermaid, pale and trembling like one on the point of death.

"But I must be paid too, and it is no trifle that I require of you for my trouble. You have the most charming voice of all the dwellers in the sea, and on it you reckon to captivate the Prince; but this voice I must have as my recompense. The best of your possessions I demand for my miraculous potion; for I must give of my own blood to impart to the mixture the sharpness of a two-edged sword."

"But if you take my voice from me," said the Princess, "what have I left to captivate the prince?"

"Your lovely form," answered the Witch; "your light aërial step, and your expressive eyes. These are surely enough to befool a poor human heart! Well, what do you say? Have you lost courage? Come, out with your tongue, that I may cut it off and take it for myself in exchange for my magic drink."

"Be it so!" answered the Princess; and

now the Witch set her caldron on the fire, to seethe the charmed potion. "Cleanliness is a principal thing," said she, taking a handful of toads and snails to scour her kettle with. She then scratched her bosom, and let the black blood drop into the vessel. The vapor that rose from the mixture took such horrid forms as to terrify the beholder. Every moment the Witch threw in new ingredients; and when the caldron boiled, sighs and lamentations rose from it resembling the wail of the crocodile. At last the mixture was ready, and was now become as clear and transparent as pure water as she poured it into a phial.

"There it is," said the hag to the Princess; and at the same moment she cut off her tongue. The little Mermaid was thus made dumb; she could neither speak nor sing.

"Should the polypi try to catch hold of you when you pass through my bower," observed the Witch, "you need only sprinkle a drop of this potion upon them, and their arms will break in a thousand pieces."

But the Princess found this unnecessary; for the polypi drew back affrighted when they perceived the shining phial in her hand, that gleamed before her like a beaming star. In this way she soon passed the dreadful wood, crossed the heath of the sorceress, and glided safely through the torrent of the roaring Maelstrom.

She now looked once again at her father's palace; the lamps in the ball-room were extinguished, and all her family were doubtless gone to rest. She would not enter, as she was unable to speak, and was, besides, on the point of leaving her home for ever. At the thought her heart was well-nigh broken; she glided into the garden, picked a flower from the bed of each sister as a remembrance, waved with her hand many a farewell towards the palace, and then rose through the dark blue waters to the upper world.

The sun had not yet risen when she reached the Prince's dwelling, and ascended the well-known marble steps—the moon was in the sky. And now the little Mer-

maid emptied the phial with the subtly-piercing draught, which convulsed her whole frame: she felt it pass through her like the thrust of a cutting sword, and it affected her so violently that she sank lifeless on the ground.

When the sun rose she awoke, and felt a burning pain in every limb; but before her stood the object of her fervent love, the handsome young Prince, who fixed his dark eyes upon her. She looked down ashamed when she saw that, in place of the long fish-like tail which she had hitherto borne, the finest legs were grown which it was possible to have. But she was naked, and she covered herself therefore with her long hair.

The Prince asked who she was, and whence she came; and, smiling sweetly, she looked at him with her bright blue eyes, for unfortunately she could speak no more. He then took her hand, and led her into his castle. At every step it was as the Witch had said,—as though she was treading on sharp-cutting blades; but she bore the pain wil-

lingly. She moved along beside the Prince like a zephyr; and all who saw her wondered at the charming grace and lightness of every movement.

When she had entered the palace, robes of muslin and of costly silks were handed to her, and she was the most lovely among the ladies of the court; but she could speak and sing no longer. Female slaves, prettily dressed in silk and gold brocade, now appeared to sing before the Prince and his royal parents. One was particularly distinguished from the others by her beautiful clear voice; and the Prince testified his approbation by clapping his hands. This made the little Mermaid quite melancholy, for she knew she could have sung much better than these slaves, if her voice had not been taken from her.

"Oh," thought she in silence, "if he did but know that for his sake I have sacrificed my voice for ever!"

The slaves now began to dance. Then the dainty little Mermaid stretched out her delicate white arms, and danced with such

a step and air as had never been seen before. With every movement the lovely grace of her body seemed more apparent, and the expression which beamed in her speaking eyes appealed to the heart of the spectators far more movingly than the songs of the female slaves.

All present were enchanted with her, but especially the young Prince, who called her his dear little foundling. And she danced again, and more beautifully still, although at every step she was obliged to bear the smart of cutting knives; and the Prince said she should always remain in his palace; and an apartment was prepared for her, provided with graceful furniture, and a bed of velvet cushions.

And the Prince had a riding-dress made for her, that she might accompany him on horseback; and they rode together through the fragrant woods, where the green boughs touched their shoulders, and the little birds rejoiced from behind the fresh leaves. With the Prince, too, she climbed the highest mountains; and although her delicate feet

bled as she went, so that the attendants remarked it, she only laughed, and still followed her dear Prince up on high, where she saw the clouds chasing each other beneath them like a flock of birds passing to other lands.

At night, when all in the palace were asleep, she would descend the marble steps to cool her feet in the refreshing sea; and she thought then of her own dear ones in the deep.

Once, while standing there in the night, her sisters came swimming by, arm-in-arm, and their singing was most melancholy. She beckoned to them, and her sisters recognized her, and told her how great had been the mourning for her in their father's house.

Henceforward they visited their sister every night; and once brought with them their old grandmother, who for many years had not been in the upper world, and their father too, the Ocean-King, with the crown upon his head. But the two old persons did not venture so near the land as to be able to speak to her.

Each day the little Mermaid grew dearer to the Prince; he loved her like a good dear child; but to make her his wife never even entered his thoughts; and yet she must become his wife, before she could obtain an immortal soul; his wife she must be, or be changed into foam and be driven restlessly and forever over the billows of the sea.

"But do you not care most for me?" her eyes seemed to say, when he pressed her fondly in his arms and kissed her beautiful forehead.

"Yes," then said the Prince, "you are dearer to me than all beside; for in goodness there is none like you. You are devoted to me; and, moreover, you resemble a maid that I once saw standing before me, but shall probably never behold again. I was on board a ship that was wrecked in a sudden storm; the waves threw me on the shore near a sacred temple, in which many virgins were performing the offices of their religion. The youngest of them found me on the shore, and saved my life. I saw her but once; yet her image is vivid before my

eyes,—she is the only one I can ever love. But you are so like her!—yes, you almost drive her remembrance from my soul! But she belongs to the holy temple, and my good fortune has therefore given me you as a consolation. Never, never will we be parted!"

"Oh, he does not know that it was I who saved his life!" thought the little Mermaid, with a sigh. "I bore him over the wild flood to the grove where the temple stands; I sat behind the rocks, and listened if mortals came; it was I who saw the beauteous maiden come whom he loves more than me." And she sighed deeply at these words; for she could not weep.—"She belongs to the holy temple, he says; she never goes into the world; she will therefore never meet him again. But I am near him; I see him daily; I will tend him, and love him, and to him will I devote my whole life."

"The Prince will soon wed the daughter of the King our neighbor," said the people; "and that's the reason why the stately ship

is being got ready. 'Tis true, they say he is going to travel through the country; but the real reason is to see the Princess. That is the cause of his taking such a large retinue with him." But the little Mermaid laughed at these conjectures; for she knew the Prince's intentions better than any one else.

"I must make a journey," said he to her; "I must go and see the beautiful Princess. My parents require me to do so; but force me to marry her—to bring her back as my betrothed—that they will never do. Besides, it is impossible for me to love the Princess; for she cannot be as like the lovely maiden of the temple as you are; and if I am to choose, I would rather take thee, my little silent foundling, with the speaking eyes!" And he kissed her, and hid her head on his heart; and then she dreamed a sweet vision of mortal happiness and of an immortal soul.

"You do not fear the water, my dumb child?" asked he tenderly, as she stood on the splendid ship that was to convey him to

the territories of the neighboring monarch. And then he told her of storms at sea, and of calms, of rare fish that inhabited the deep, and what divers had seen below. But she smiled at his words: for she knew better than any mortal creature how it looked, and what went on, in the depths of the ocean.

In the moonlight night, when all on board slept except the man at the helm, she sat at the bow and looked over the ship's side into the sea. It seemed to her as though she could see her father's palace, and her old grandmother with her silver crown, as she gazed down into the parted waters.

And then her sisters appeared upon the waves, looked at her fixedly and with sorrowful expression, and stretched out their arms towards her. She beckoned to them, smiled, and would have told them by signs that she was happy; but just at that moment the cabin-boy approached, and the sisters dived down so suddenly that the boy thought the white appearance he saw upon

the surface of the water was only the foam of the sea.

The next morning the ship entered the harbor of the splendid capital of the neighboring king. The bells rang a merry peal, and the clarions sounded from the high towers, while the soldiers in the streets paraded with waving colors and glittering arms.

Each day brought with it some new festival. But the Princess had not yet arrived in the town: she had been educated in a convent far off, where she had been taught the exercise of all royal virtues. At last she came.

The little Mermaid was curious to see her beauty; and she was forced to acknowledge that she had never on earth beheld more noble features. The skin of the Princess was so fair and delicate that her veins were seen through it; and from behind her dark lashes smiled a pair of deep-brown eyes.

"It is herself!" exclaimed the Prince, on beholding her, "Thou art she who saved

my life when I lay senseless on the shore!" and he pressed his blushing affianced bride to his beating heart. "Oh, now I am more than happy!" said he to his little dumb foundling. "That which I never hoped to see fulfilled has happened. Thou wilt rejoice at my happiness; for thou lovest me more than all who surround me."

Then the little Mermaid kissed his hand in her dumb sorrow, and she thought her heart would break; for the dawn of his marriage-day was to bring her unavoidable death.

And again the church-bells rang, and heralds rode through the streets of the capital and announced the approaching wedding of the Princess. Odorous flames burnt out of silver vases on every altar; the priests swung the censers, and bride and bridegroom gave each other the hand while the clergyman blessed the holy union. The little Mermaid, clad in silk and cloth of gold, stood behind the Princess and held the train of her bridal dress; but her ear heard not the solemn music, her eye saw nothing of

the holy ceremony; she thought of her own death which that night was to bring, and of her irrevocable loss of this world, and the next.

On the same evening the bride and bridegroom went on board of the ship; the cannons thundered, flags waved, and in the centre of the deck stood a magnificent pavilion of gold cloth and purple, furnished with the most costly cushions for the princely pair. The sails swelled with a favorable wind, and the vessel glided lightly over the surface of the blue sea.

When it grew dusk, colored lamps were hung up, and the ship's crew began dancing on deck. The little Mermaid was unconsciously reminded of the sight the ship presented at her first appearance in the upper world, before the wreck took place. A like magnificence was then displayed; and now she must skim along in the dance like a swallow that is pursued. All shouted applause; for never had she been seen to dance so enchantingly. It is true, her delicate feet suffered indescribably all the while;

but she was now insensible to that, the suffering her heart endured overcame all other pain.

It was the last evening she was to see him for whom she had left her home and all who were dear to her; for whom she had given up her charming voice, and daily endured the most violent pains, without his having even the slightest suspicion of the matter.

It was the last night that she would breathe the same air in which he, the dearly loved one, lived; the last night in which she would enjoy the sight of the deep sea and of the starry sky; for an eternal night, without sense or dreaming, awaited her. And all was joy on board till long past midnight; and even she laughed like the rest, with the thoughts of death and everlasting annihilation in her bleeding heart. The Prince kissed his lovely bride, and arm-in-arm they went to rest in the beautiful tent.

Now all was still and quiet on the ship; the helmsman only continued standing at

the rudder. The little Mermaid laid her white arms upon the gallery, and looked towards the east for the coming dawn: the first sunbeam would be her death—that she knew.

Then she saw her sisters rise from out the sea; their faces were deadly pale, and their long hair they once had, was no longer fluttering on their necks, for it had all been cut off.

"We have given it to the Witch," said they, "that she might lend her aid, and that thou mightest not perish this night. She has given us a knife; here it is; feel how sharp it is! Before the sunrise thou must plunge it in the heart of the Prince; and when his warm blood drops upon thy feet, they will again grow together and become the tail of a fish; thou wilt be again a Mermaid, and wilt live full three hundred years before thou art as the froth of the sea. Quick, then! for he must die, or thou, before the sun appear! Our old grandmother mourns so sadly for thee, that her silver hair has fallen off through sorrow, as ours

under the scissors of the Witch. Kill the Prince, and come to us! Haste—haste! dost thou not see a red streak in the sky, announcing the near approach of the sun? But a few moments, and he will rise, and thou art lost for ever!" At these words, heaving a deep and painful sigh, they plunged down and disappeared beneath the water.

The little Mermaid drew aside the purple curtains of the pavilion, and saw the lovely bride reposing on the bosom of the Prince; and she bent over both, kissed his forehead, looked up at the sky, and saw that the flush of the opening day grew brighter and brighter.

In his dream the Prince pronounced the name of his bride—she only lived in his thoughts; and the fatal knife quivered in the Mermaid's hand. But suddenly she hurled the murderous instrument far into the sea; the waves where it fell blazed up in a bright flame, and it seemed as if the water was dyed with blood. Once more she gazed with glassy eye on the beloved Prince, then

flung herself from the ship into the sea; and she felt her body gradually dissolving into foam.

The sun now rose out of the sea; his rays fell warm and genial on the cold yeast of the waves, so that the little Mermaid did not feel death; she still saw the beautiful sun, and above her floated a thousand lovely transparent forms. She could see the white sails of the ship and the red clouds in the sky; and the voices of those aërial shapes were such sublime and spiritual melody, that a human ear was as incapable of perceiving it as the eye was unable to behold the varied imageries. They hovered around her floating through the air without wings, borne by their own buoyancy. The little Mermaid now saw that she too had a body resembling these ethereal forms, and felt that she was gradually raised upwards to higher regions from out of the froth of the ocean.

"Whither are they bringing me?" asked she; and her words sounded like the voices

of heavenly beings, which no earthly music can ever imitate.

"To the daughters of air!" sounded in answer. "The Mermaid has not an immortal soul, and can only obtain that heavenly gift by winning the love of a son of man. Her eternal life depends on her union with him. Neither do the daughters of air possess an immortal soul; but they may win it by good deeds. We fly to burning lands, where the sultry air of the plague kills the children of men, and waft them fresh cooling breath. We spread the fragrance of the flowers through the air, and thus distribute new life and health over the earth. When in this manner we have for three hundred years done all the good that lay in our power, we obtain eternal life, and share the immortal bliss of man. Poor little Mermaid! Thou, by the impulse of thy own heart, hast done the like; thou hast borne and suffered; and now, raised to the world of aërial spirits, thou mayest by good deeds earn an immortal soul at the end of three hundred years."

And the little Mermaid stretched her transparent arms upwards to the sun, and, for the first time in her life tears wetted her eyes.

And now again on the ship all were awake and rejoicing; she saw the Prince and his lovely bride, and watched how both sought after her. Sorrowfully they looked at the froth of the sea, as if they knew that she had plunged into the waves. Unseen she kissed the bridegroom's forehead, smiled at him, and then rose with the other children of air, and soared high above the rosy clouds that floated so peacefully over the ship.

"So, after three hundred years, shall we be soaring in the kingdom of God!"

"But we may get there sooner!" whispered one of the sisters in her ear. "Unseen, we fly into the abodes of men where children are, and for each day in which we find a good child that is a joy to its parents and deserves their love, does God in his great mercy shorten the time of our probation. No child knoweth when we pass

through his chamber; but our joy at the sight calls forth a smile, and one year is taken from the three hundred that we have to wait. But if we see a naughty or wicked child, we shed tears of sorrow, and every tear we shed prolongs the time of our probation by a day."

The Storks.

N the roof of a house situated at the extremities of a small town a Stork's nest had been built. The Mamma Stork sat in the nest with her four little ones, who stretched out their heads with their little black beaks; for as yet they had not grown red. Not far off, on the ridge of the roof, stood stiff and proud, the Papa Stork; one leg he had drawn up under his body, so that one might suppose he was really a

little tired with standing sentry. You would have thought he was carved out of wood, so still did he stand.

"It looks very consequential for my wife to have a sentry before the nest," thought he to himself; "for the people, of course, don't know that I am her husband,—they think, no doubt, that I have been ordered here as sentinel. And it looks so very grand!" And so he continued standing on one leg.

In the street below a whole troop of children were playing; and when they observed the Storks, one of the wildest of the boys began to sing the old song about young Storks which the children in Denmark sing, and all the rest immediately joined in chorus; but they did not repeat the words very correctly, and only just as they could remember them:

"Stork, Stork, long-legs,
What are you about?
Fly home to your eggs,
Your wife is in her nest here,
Your young are peeping out.

One we'll hang,
Then burn his brother;
We'll stick the third upon a spear,
And then we'll shoot the other!"

"Only hear what the boys are singing!" said the little Storks; "they say we are to be burned and hanged!"

"Don't care about what they say," said the Mamma Stork. "You need not to listen to them, and then they will do you no harm."

But the boys kept on singing, and pointing at the Storks; one boy only, whose name was Peter, said it was wicked to make fun of animals, and would have nothing to do with the matter.

The mamma consoled her little ones, and said "Don't care about it; only look how quietly your father stands; and that, too, upon one leg!"

"But we are so frightened!" said the young Storks; and they drew their heads as far into the nest as they could.

The next day, when the children met

again at play, they began the old song, as soon as they saw the Storks:

"One we'll hang,
And we'll burn his brother!"

"Shall we really be burned and hanged?" asked the little ones.

"What nonsense!" said the mother. "You shall learn to fly, and I will drill you. Then we'll go into the meadows, and pay the frogs a visit. They bow to us in the water, and sing 'croak, croak;' and then we eat them. Oh, it will be so amusing!"

"And what then?" asked the little ones.

"Why, then all the Storks of the whole neighborhood assemble, and the autumn manœuvres begin. One must be able to fly well then; for if one cannot, then comes the General and strikes it dead with his beak. So pay attention when the drill begins, in order that you may learn something."

"Oh, then, we shall really be murdered, as the boys said! Oh, do hear!—now they are singing it again!"

"Listen to me, and not to them," said

the Mamma Stork. "After the great manœuvre, we fly away to the warmer countries; far, far from here, over the woods and the hills. We shall fly to Egypt, where the three-cornered stone houses are, whose tops reach the clouds. They are called Pyramids, and are older than any Stork can think. A river is there that overflows its banks, so that the whole country is like a morass. Then one goes into the mud and eats frogs."

"Oh!" said all the little ones.

"Yes, that is so delightful! The whole day one does nothing but eat; and while we lead such a nice life, here in this country there is not a single green leaf on the trees. It is so cold here, that the clouds freeze, and crack, and fall down in little white rags."

It was the snow she meant; but she could not express herself more plainly.

"Do the little naughty boys freeze and crack into bits too?" asked the young Storks.

"No, they do not crack into bits quite, but very nearly; and they are obliged to

stay in the dark rooms, and sit in the chimney-corner. You, on the other hand, all that time can fly about in a foreign land, where there is warm sunshine, and where there are flowers."

Some time had now passed, and the young ones were so large that they could stand up in the nest and look around. And Papa Stork came every day with the very nicest little frogs, with snails, and all the titbits that Storks like, which he could find. Oh, it was extraordinary, what delicious morsels he got for them, and it was so droll to see him showing off his tricks. He put his head back quite on his tail, and made a noise with his bill like a rattle; and then he told some pretty stories; all stories about the marshes.

"Hark ye! you must now learn to fly!" said the Mamma Stork one day. On which all the four little ones were obliged to get out of the nest on the ridge of the roof. How they tottered! how they balanced themselves with their wings! and yet they very nearly tumbled down.

"Only look at me!" said their mother. "You must hold your head so! And put out your leg so! And thus must you set your wings! Now, then! One, two! One, two! That is what will help you on in the world!" And then off she flew a little way; and the young Storks made a little awkward jump, when—plump!—there they lay; for their bodies were so heavy.

"I don't want to fly, I cannot, it's no use trying," said one, and crept back again into the nest. "I do not care about seeing the warm countries."

"Will you, then, stay here and freeze to death when winter comes? Shall the boys come and hang, and burn, and shoot you: just wait a minute till I go and call them!"

"Oh, don't!" said the little Stork, and began again to hop about the roof like the others.

On the third day they really were able to fly a little; and then they thought they could sit and rest in the air; but—plump!—down they went, and were obliged to make use of their wings. Just then the boys

went down the street, and sang the old song:

"Stork, Stork, long-legs!"

"Shall we fly down and pick out their eyes?" said the young ones.

"No; leave them alone," said their mother. "Listen to me, that is much more important! One, two, three! To the right about, face! One, two, three! To the left about, face! Round the chimney-pot! You see, that was very well! The last flap of your wings was so exact, and so nicely done, that I will allow you to go with me to-morrow to the marsh. Many highly-respectable Stork-families come there with their children; now let me have the satisfaction of hearing that mine are the nicest and best behaved of all; and stand upright, your chest forwards! So!—that looks well, and gives a sort of dignity!"

"But are we to have no revenge at all on the wicked boys?" asked the young Storks.

"Let them sing as much as they like! Why, you fly up to the clouds, don't you?

you go to the land of the Pyramids; while they must freeze, and have neither a sweet apple nor a green leaf."

"But we will be revenged, though!" whispered they to each other; and then the drilling began again.

Of all the boys in the street, there was not one more naughty in singing jeering songs than he who was the beginner of it all; and that was a little shrimp of a fellow not more than six years old. The young Storks thought of course that he was a hundred years old, for he was much bigger than their father or mother; and what did they know how old a child might be, or grown-up people either? All their rage was to fall on this boy, who had begun to tease them, and always kept on singing his old song. The young Storks were much excited; and the bigger they grew, the less could they put up with it; so that at last their mother was obliged to promise that they should have their revenge, but not before the last day of their stay in the land.

"We must first see, you know, how you

go through the grand review. If you behave ill, so that the General sends his beak through your body, then the boys will be right in one sense, after all. Now let us see!"

"You shall see," said the young Storks: and now, for the first time, they really took pains; they practised every day, and flew so lightly and prettily that it was quite a pleasure to see them.

Autumn came at last, and all the Storks assembled to fly away to warmer lands while it is winter with us. That was a manœuvre! They stretched away over the fields and the woods, over towns and villages, only to see how well they could fly; for they had a long journey before them. The young Storks got on so capitally, that on their testimonials was put, not only "praiseworthy," but "snake-and-frog-worthy" also. This was the best character they could have; and now they might eat snakes and frogs, and they did so too.

"Now we will have our revenge," said they.

"Leave off talking of revenge," said the mother. Listen to me, which is a great deal better. Do you not remember the good little boy who said, when the others sung 'that it was a sin to make fun of the Storks;' "let us reward him, that is better than having revenge." "Yes, let us reward him," said the young Storks. "He shall have, next summer, a nice little sister, such a beautiful little sister as never was seen! Will not that be a reward for him?" said the mother.

"It will;" said the young ones.

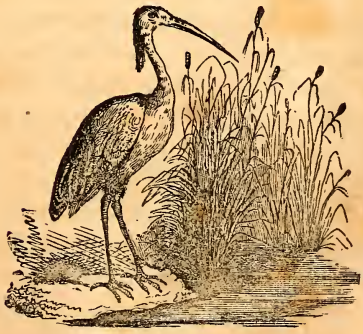
"A sweet little sister he shall have!" continued the mother. "And as his name is Peter, you shall all be called Peter too."

"Yes, but what shall we do with the good-for-nothing boy who began to jeer at us?" cried all the young Storks at once.

"To him we will bring neither brother nor sister. What I have fixed on is best. I know where all the little babies lie till the Storks come and carry them to their parents. The nice little children sleep, and have such beautiful dreams as they

never have again. Now every parent wishes to have such a little child, and all children wish for a brother or sister. We will fly to the pond, and for each of the children that did not sing the song nor laugh at the Storks, we will fetch one."

And what she said happened; the little boy had the loveliest of little sisters next year; and from that time all the Storks in Denmark were named Peter, and they are called so to this very day.



The Nightingale.

CHINA, you must know, has an Emperor who is a Chinese; and all those he has around him are Chinese people too. It is a long time ago, now, since these things happened, but just for that very reason it is worth while to hear this story, before it is forgotten.

The Nightingale.

The Emperor's palace was the most magnificent in the whole world, made entirely of the finest porcelain; so costly, but also so fragile that one was really obliged to take care when one touched it.

In the garden the most curious flowers were to be seen, and on the most beautiful of these, little silver bells were fastened, which kept on tinkling, in order that no one might pass by without remarking the flowers. Yes, everything was so cunningly devised in the Emperor's garden, and it extended so far that the gardener himself did not know where the end was; whoever went beyond it, however, came into a most beautiful wood, with high trees and deep lakes.

The wood reached back a great way, to the very sea, which was deep and blue; great ships could sail close under the branches. And amid these boughs there dwelt a Nightingale, which sang so sweetly that even the poor fisherman, who, however, had many other things to do, stood still when he was out at night to draw his nets, and listened to the Nightingale.

"How beautiful it is!" said he; but then he was obliged to go about his work and forget the bird; but the following night, when she sang again and the fisherman came out, he said anew, "Oh, how beautiful it is!"

From all parts of the world came travelers to the city of the Emperor, and they admired it, and with astonishment they beheld the palace, and the garden, and all the wonderful things around them; but when they heard the Nightingale, they all said, "However, this the best!"

When the travelers returned to their homes, they related what they had seen, and the learned men wrote many books about the city, and the palace, and the garden: but they did not forget the Nightingale; she was placed first; and they who could write poetry, all wrote the most charming verses about the Nightingale in the wood near the deep lake.

These books went round the world; and so at last one reached the Emperor. He sat in his golden chair, and read, and read, and

every moment nodded his head; for he was pleased with the splendid description of the city, and the palace, and the garden. There, too, stood these words: "But the Nightingale is the best of all."

"The deuce!" said the Emperor: "the Nighingale! I know of no Nightingale! Is such a bird in my dominions, and, moreover, in my garden? I never heard of it!—and that one must first learn such a thing from books!"

"Hereupon he called his Chamberlain. He was so high a personage that no one of inferior rank dared address or speak with him; and when any one did venture to ask him any thing, he only answered "Pe!"—and that has no particular meaning.

"Why, they say there is a most curious bird here, called a Nightingale," said the Emperor; "they say her song is better than any thing else in my whole empire: what's the reason I have not been informed of it?"

"I have never heard her mentioned before," said the Chamberlain; "she has never been presented at court."

"It is my will that she comes here and sings this very evening," said the Emperor. "The whole world knows what I have, and I do not know it myself!"

"I never heard her mentioned before," said the Chamberlain; "but I will go and look for her."

But where was the melodious bird to be found? The Chamberlain ran up one flight of stairs and down another, through halls and corridors; not a single person whom he met had heard any thing of the Nightingale; and the Chamberlain ran back again to the Emperor, and said it was certainly only a tale invented by the persons who wrote the books.

"Your imperial Majesty must not believe all that is written or printed in books!" said he. "Much in them is pure invention, and that is what is called the Black Art."

"But the book in which I read it," said the Emperor, "was sent me by the mighty Emperor of Japan, and therefore it cannot be an untruth. I will hear the Nightingale! She must come here this very evening!

She shall enjoy my highest favor; and if she do not come, then after supper I'll have the tattoo played on the back of every courtier!"

"Tsing-pe!" said the Chamberlain; and again he ran up stairs and down stairs, through all the halls and corridors; and half the court ran with him, for they did not much like having the tattoo played upon their backs. There was such a questioning about the wonderful nightingale that the whole world knew and talked about, but which nobody at court had ever seen or heard of.

At last they met a poor little girl, employed in the kitchen, who said: "The Nightingale? oh, I know it very well! How she can sing! Every evening I am allowed to carry the remnants from the table to my poor sick mother,—she lives down yonder near the shore,—and when I come back, and stop to rest in the wood, then I hear the Nightingale sing! The tears always come into my eyes; it is just as if my own mother was kissing me!"

"Little kitchen-maid," said the Chamberlain, "I will get you a permanent place in the kitchen, besides a permission to see his Majesty the Emperor dine, if you can conduct us to the Nightingale; for she is announced at court for this evening."

So then they all went together to the wood, where the Nightingale used to sing: half the court was with them. As they were going, a cow began to low.

"Oh," said the court-pages, "now we have her! The power is really extraordinary for so small an animal! I am certain I have heard the voice somewhere before already."

"No, that is the lowing of the cows," said the little girl; "we are still far from the place."

Then the frogs in the pond croaked.

"Admirable!" said the Chinese court-chaplain; "that is the famous singer, now I hear her; it sounds just like the ringing of church-bells, only in a smaller way!"

"No, those are frogs," said the little

kitchen maid. "But now, I think, you will soon hear her."

Just then the Nightingale began to warble one of her long sweet trills.

"That is she!" said the girl; "hark! hark! and there she sits!" And she pointed to a little grey bird which was perched high up on a bough.

"Is it possible!" said the Chamberlain. "I did not fancy she would be like that! How the simpleton looks! She has doubtless changed color at the sight of so many personages of rank."

"Little Nightingale," said the maiden quite loud, "our gracious Emperor wishes you would sing something to him."

"With the greatest pleasure!" said the Nightingale; and she sang so that it was a delight to listen.

"It sounds like glass bells," said the Chamberlain; "and look at the little throat, how it moves! It is extraordinary that we never heard her before: she will have wonderful success at court."

"Shall I sing to the Emperor again?"

asked the Nightingale; for she thought the Emperor was present.

"My excellent Nightingale," said the Chamberlain, "I have the inexpressible pleasure to require your attendance this evening at a court-festival, where you will delight his Imperial Majesty with your charming song."

"It is heard to far greater advantage in the green wood," said the Nightingale; but she followed willingly, when she heard it was the Emperor's wish.

The palace was decked out in fine style! The walls and the floors, which were made of porcelain, glittered from many thousand golden lamps: the most beautiful flowers, with the merriest tinkling bells, were placed in the corridors: there was a bustle and a draught, and then all the bells tinkled so that one could not hear oneself speak.

In the midst of the grand saloon, where the Emperor sat, a golden perch was erected: on this the Nighingale was to sit. The whole court was there, and the little kitchen-maid had received permission to stand be-

hind the door; for she had now actually the rank and title of "Maid of the kitchen." Every body was in full dress; and every body looked at the little grey bird, to whom the Emperor nodded, as a signal for her to begin.

And the Nightingale sang with such melting sweetness that tears came into the Emperor's eyes—tears rolled down his cheeks; and then the Nightingale sang more beautifully still; her song went to the heart of all who heard her; and the Emperor was happy; and in an ecstasy of delight, he said the Nightingale should have his golden slipper, and wear it about her neck. But the Nightingale thanked him: she was rewarded sufficiently already.

"I have seen tears in the Emperor's eyes;" said she; "that is to me the greatest treasure. The tears of an Emperor have a wonderful virtue in them. Heaven knows, in them I have reward enough!" and then she sang again with her sweet and lovely voice.

"It is the prettiest piece of coquetry ever

known!" said the ladies around, and they took water in their mouths, to make their voices liquid, and tried to move their throats as she did: they then thought themselves Nightingales; yes, even the lackeys and ladies'-maids gave notice that they too were satisfied; and that is saying a great deal, for, of all people, they are the most difficult to please. Yes, the Nightingale was very successful.

She was now to remain at court, to have her own cage, as well as the permission to fly out twice in the day, and once in the night. Twelve servants were given her, who were to hold a silk riband tied to her leg; and pretty tight they held. There was no pleasure in such a flight.

The whole town spoke of the wonderful bird; and when two persons met, one said "Night," and the other "Gale;" and then they sighed, and understood each other perfectly: yes, the children of eleven citizens were named after her; but none of them had her tones in their throats.

One day there arrived a great parcel for

the Emperor, and on it was written, "Nightingale."

"Here we have another new book about our celebrated bird," said the Emperor: however, it was no book, but a little piece of mechanism, which lay in a box: an artificial Nightingale, which was meant to look like the living one; but set all over with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. As soon as the artificial bird was wound up, it could sing one of the songs which the real Nightingale sang; and its tail went up and down all the time, and glittered with silver and gold. Round its neck was a little riband, on which was written, "The Nightingale of the Emperor of China is poor in comparison with that of the Emperor of Japan."

"That's splendid!" exclaimed every one: and he who had brought the Nightingale immediately received the title of "Imperial Chief Nightingale-bearer." Now they must sing together! That will make a fine duet!

And so together they were obliged to sing; but it would not do very well, for the

real Nightingale sang in her own way, and the artificial bird was moved by wheels. "It is not his fault," said the Chief Musician: "he keeps time wonderfully well, and is formed exactly after my school."

Then the artificial bird was to sing alone. He had just as much success as the real Nightingale; and, besides, he was so much prettier to look at; he shone like bracelets and breast-pins.

Three-and-thirty times did he sing the same piece, and yet he was not at all tired; ever body would have liked to have heard it again from the very beginning, but the Emperor thought that now the real Nightingale ought to sing something;—but where was she? No one had observed her take the opportunity, while they were all listening and looking at the new favorite to fly out of the open window, away to her own green wood.

"But what is the meaning of that?" said the Emperor; and all the courtiers scolded, and thought the Nightingale a most ungrateful animal. "Nevertheless we have the

best bird still," said they; and for the four-and-thirtieth time they heard the same tune, but they did not know it quite, it was so difficult; and the Chief Musician praised the bird so exceedingly; yes, he even asserted it was better than the real Nightingale; not only as regarded appearance and the many diamonds, but also the inside.

"For look, your Majesty," said he, "and you, ladies and gentlemen; with the real Nightingale one never can calculate beforehand what is to come; but with the mechanical bird all is determined: it will be so, and not otherwise; one can explain it, one can take it to pieces, and show the human contrivance: how the wheels are placed, how they move, and how one follows after the other."

"Just my opinion!" cried every body; and the Chief Musician gained permission to show the bird to the people on the next holiday. "They should also hear him sing," said the Emperor; and they did hear him, and were as pleased as if they had been enjoying themselves with tea—for that is

truly Chinese, and all said "O!" and held up their forefingers and nodded their heads. But the poor fisherman, who had heard the the real Nightingale, said, "It sounds pretty enough—it sounds nearly like; but yet there is something wanting,—I do not know what."

The real Nightingale was banished the empire. But she remained quietly in her woody retreat.

The artificial bird had his place on a silken cushion, close to the Emperor's bed; and all the presents he received, gold and precious stones, lay around him; and he had risen in rank to be "Imperial Bed-chamber:" in rank NUMBER ONE, on the left hand; for the Emperor considers the side on which the heart is as the more exalted; and the heart is placed on the left side even with an Emperor.

And the Chief Musician wrote five-and-twenty volumes about the mechanical bird; which were so learned, and so long, and so full of the most difficult Chinese words, that every one said he had read and understood

them; for otherwise he would have been thought stupid, and would have had the tattoo played upon his back.

Thus passed a whole year: the Emperor, the Court, and every Chinese knew each clucking sound of the song by heart; but just on that very account they found it so beautiful: they could now accompany the song of the bird; and they did do so. The boys in the street sang "zi-zi-zi—kluk-luk-luk;" and the Emperor himself sang it too. Oh, it certainly was very charming!

But one evening, when the artificial bird was in the best part of his song, and the Emperor lay in bed and listened, "snap!" went something in the inside of the bird: a something made "burrrr!" all the wheels ran round, and the music ceased!

The Emperor jumped quickly out of bed, and sent for his private physician; but what good could he do? Then he sent for the watchmaker; and at last, after much debate and examination, the bird was in some measure put to rights again; but the watchmaker said it must be taken great care

of; for the pegs were nearly worn out, and could not possibly be renewed; at least not so as to play with any certainty.

That was a source of lamentation! Only once a year did they dare to let the artificial bird sing; and there was a difficulty even about that: but then the principal Musician made a little speech full of his difficult words, and said it was just as good as formerly; and after that it *was* just as good.

Now five years had passed; and there was a great mourning throughout the land: for in reality all cared a good deal about their Emperor. He was now ill, and would not live, it was said: a new Emperor had already been chosen; and the people assembledbefore the palace, and asked the Chamberlain how the Emperor was?

"Peish!" said he, and shook his head.

Chill and pale lay the Emperor in his ample, magnificent bed: all the Court thought he was dead already, and each one had hastened out to salute the new Emperor; the lackeys ran away to have a

little gossip about it, and the ladies'-maids had a great tea-party.

Every where around, in all the halls and corridors, the floor was covered with cloth, so that not a footfall might be heard; and that was the reason it was so still—so very still. But the Emperor was not yet dead: stiff and pale, there he lay in the magnificent bed with the long velvet curtains and the heavy golden tassels; high above, a window was open, and the moon shone down on the Emperor and on the artificial bird.

The poor Emperor could hardly breathe: he felt as if something was pressing on his chest; he opened his eyes, and saw it was Death that sat on his breast, who had put on his golden crown, and, in one hand held the golden sabre, in the other the splendid banner of the Emperor; and around, from the folds of the great velvet curtains, peeped out the strangest faces, some quite ugly, and others so pleasing, so mild. They were all the good and evil deeds of the Emperor, which stared him in the face now that Death was sitting at his heart.

"Dost thou remember this?" whispered they, one after the other: "Dost thou remember that?" and then they recounted so much that the drops of sweat stood on his forehead.

"I have never known anything like this," said the Emperor. "Music! Music! the great Chinese gong," cried he, "so that I may not hear what they are saying!"

But they went on; and Death nodded his head quite in the Chinese fashion to all they said.

"Music! Music!" screamed the Emperor. "Oh, dear little artificial bird, sing—oh, sing! I have given thee gold and precious things; I have even given thee my golden slipper to hang around thy neck; sing then—oh, sing!"

But the bird was silent; for no one was there to wind it up—and without that he could not sing; and Death continued gazing at the Emperor with his great empty sockets; and it was quite still the while—fearfully still!

Suddenly was heard, very near the win-

dow, the tones of the sweetest song: it was the little live Nightingale, that was sitting on a bough without. She had heard of the severe illness of her Emperor, and was now come to sing to him, and bring him hope and consolation.

And, now as she sang, the forms became fainter and fainter, the blood flowed quicker and quicker through the Emperor's weak limbs, and even Death listened and said, "Go on, little Nightingale, go on!"

"And wilt thou give me the magnificent golden sabre? Wilt thou give me the splendid banner, and the Emperor's crown?" said the Nightingale.

And Death gave all these emblems of royalty for a single song: and the Nightingale sang on; and she sang of the peaceful churchyard, where the white roses bloom, where the lilac sends forth its fragrance, and the fresh grass is bedewed by the tears of sorrowing friends. Thereon Death felt a longing after his garden, and, like a cold white shadow, floated hoveringly out of the window.

"Thanks, thanks!" said the Emperor. "Thou heavenly little bird, I know thee well! I banished thee my dominions, and yet hast thou, by thy song, dispelled the evil faces from my bed, and Death from my heart. How shall I reward thee?"

"Thou hast already rewarded me," said the Nightingale; "I saw tears in thy eyes when I sang to thee for the first time; that I shall never forget. Those are jewels that gladden a singer's heart! But now sleep and get refreshed and well. I will sing to thee!"

And she sang, and the Emperor fell into a sweet sleep; and oh, how calm, how restorative, was that sleep!

The sun shone in at the window when he awoke, strengthened and restored to health: not a single one of his servants was come back, for they all thought him dead; but the Nightingale still sat there and sang.

"Thou shalt always stay with me," said the Emperor; "thou shalt only sing when it pleases thee; and as to the artificial bird, I'll dash it into a thousand pieces."

"Do not do that," said the Nightingale: "why, he has done what he could. Keep him by you a while longer. I cannot take up my abode in the palace; but let me come when it pleases me; then I will sit of an evening on the bough near the window, and will sing to thee a free song, that thou shalt be at once glad and thoughtful. I will sing to thee of the happy and suffering; I will sing to thee of the good and the evil which lies hidden around thee. The little songster flies far from here, to the poor fisherman, to the cottage of the peasant, to all that are far from thee and thy court. I love thy heart more than thy crown; and yet has the crown an odor of sanctity about it. I will come, I will sing; but one thing must thou promise me!"

"Everything!" said the Emperor, and now he stood in his imperial robes, which he had himself put on; and held the scimitar which was heavy with gold, next to his heart.

"One thing I beg of thee! Tell no one that thou hast a little bird which comes and

tells thee every thing! It will be much better not!"

And then the Nightingale flew away.

The attendants came in to look after their dead Emperor—yes, there they stood; and the Emperor said, "Good morning!"

The Elf of the Rose.

BUT in the middle of a garden, a long time ago there stood a rose tree, full of the most beautiful roses; and in one of these, the loveliest of all, dwelt an Elf, who was so very tiny, that no human eye could see him. Behind every rose-leaf he had a bed-chamber: and he

was as slender and handsome as only a child can be; besides which he had wings that reached from his shoulders to his feet.

Oh, how sweetly odorous were his chambers, and how beautiful and transparent were the walls! Those, you know, were the delicate pink rose-leaves.

The whole day he amused himself in the warm sunshine;—flew from one flower to the other, danced on the wings of the flying butterflies, and counted how many steps he must take to run over all the highways and paths of a single linden-leaf. That was what we should call the veins of the leaf, but he looked on them as highroads and footpaths. For him it was a long and weary way, and before he had finished the sun had gone down; but he had, it is true, begun too late.

It was growing very cold, the dew was falling, the wind blew; the best thing he could do was to go home as fast as he could, so he made as much haste as possible; but the rose was closed already, and he could

not get in; not a single rose was open. The poor little Elf was sadly frightened; he had never before been a single night from home; he had always slept so sweetly behind the warm rose-leaves, now, he certainly would get his death of cold.

At the other end of the garden was, he knew, a bower of honeysuckle, the flowers of which looked like large painted horns. In one of these would he creep, and sleep there till the next morning.

He flew to the spot. Hush! There were two persons in the bower; a young and handsome man, and a most lovely maiden. They sat near each other, and wished that they might never be separated: they were more to each other than father or mother can ever be to the best of children.

"And yet we must part," said the young man. "Thy brother looketh on us with an evil eye, and, therefore, sends me on a mission far hence, beyond the mountains, and across the sea! Farewell, my sweet one, my betrothed! for such thou art."

And they kissed each other, and the

young maiden wept, and gave him a rose; but before she did so, she pressed a kiss upon it, so fervent and burning that the rose opened. Instantly the little Elf flew in, and leant his head on the sweetly odorous walls; and he could hear quite well the words "Farewell! farewell!" and he felt that the rose was placed in the bosom of the young man; and oh, how the heart beat! the little Elf could not go to sleep, so violent was the knocking!

But the rose did not remain long in his bosom. The young man took it in his hand, and as he went alone through the dark wood, he kissed the flower so often, and pressed it so to his lips, that the poor Elf was almost crushed to death. He could feel through the leaves how the young man's lips burned, and even the rose had opened as in the warmest noontide sun.

Then came another man through the wood, black-looking and angry. It was the wicked brother of the lovely maiden. He drew a long sharp knife, and while the other kissed the rose, the wicked man stab-

bed him to death, and cut off his head, and buried it with the body in the soft earth beneath a linden.

"Now he is dead and forgotten!" thought the wicked brother; "he will never return. On a distant journey beyond sea one may easily lose one's life; and so he has. He will not come back, and my sister dare not inquire about him of me!"

So with his feet he scraped the dead leaves over the heaped-up earth, and went home in the dark night: but he went not alone, as he thought he did. The little Elf went with him; he sat in a linden-leaf that was rolled together, which had fallen among the hair of the wicked man while digging the grave. He had now put his hat on, and, it was within, very dark; and the little Elf trembled with fright and rage at the horrid deed.

It was morning when the man came home. He took off his hat and went into his sister's sleeping-room. There lay the lovely blooming maiden, and dreamed of him she so dearly loved, and who she thought was

crossing mountains, and passing through forests; and the cruel brother bent over her, and laughed as none but a demon can do. Then the withered leaf fell from his hair on the bed-covering; but he did not remark it, and went away to get a little sleep himself.

But the Elf crept out of the withered leaf, went to the ear of the sleeping maiden, and related to her, as in a dream, the dreadful murder; described the spot where her brother had killed her lover, and where the body lay; told her of the blooming linden close by, and said, "Lest you should think what I tell you is a dream, you will find, on awaking, a withered leaf upon your bed.

And she awoke and found the leaf. Oh, what bitter tears she wept! But she dared tell no one of her grief. The window remained open the whole day, so that the little Elf could easily fly out into the garden to the roses and the other flowers; but he had not the heart to leave the sorrowful maiden.

There was a monthly rose in the win-

dow, and in one of its flowers he seated himself, and there he could be near the poor girl who was so unhappy. Her brother came often into the room, and was so merry and spiteful; but she dared not say a word of her great affliction.

As soon as it was night she stole out of the house, went in the wood to the place where the linden stood, dashed away the leaves from the earth, dug into it, and found the murdered man immediately. Oh, how she wept, and implored God mercifully to let her soon die!

Gladly would she have taken the body home with her, but that she could not do; so she took the pallid head with its closed eyes, kissed the cold lips, and cut away a beautiful lock of long silky hair, which she laid near her heart.

"This will I keep!" said she; and after she had covered the dead body with earth and leaves, she took home with her a little jasmine tree, that grew, full of blossoms, in the wood where the grave was.

As soon as she was in her room, she

fetched the largest flower-pot she could find, laid in it the beautiful curling hair, covered it with earth, and planted the jasmine-tree in the flower-pot.

"Farewell! farewell!" whispered the little Elf; for he could no longer endure to witness so much grief, and flew off to his rose in the garden. But its flowers were gone; a few faded leaves only hung still on the green bush.

"Alas, how soon is there an end of all that is beautiful and good!" sighed the Elf. At last, however, he found a rose; he alighted among its fragrant leaves, and made it his home.

Every morning he flew to the window of the poor sorrowing maiden: there she always stood beside her flower-pot, and wept. The bitter tears fell upon the jasmine; and while she grew paler and paler from day to day, the little slip grew fresher and greener; one shoot put forth after the other, and the delicate buds unfolded themselves in flowers; and she kissed them. But the cruel brother scolded, and asked

if she were gone mad? He said he could not comprehend why she always wept over the flower-pot, and would not have her do so.

He little knew what secret lay within the dark mould. But she knew it; and she leaned her head against the flower-pot; and while thus sleeping the little Elf discovered her. He mounted to her ear, told her of the evening passed in the bower, of the fragrance of the rose, and of the loves of the Elves; and so she dreamed sweetly, and while she dreamed her life departed: the beautiful angel of death conveyed her spirit away from this world, and she was in heaven with him she loved.

And the jasmine opened its large white flowers, and shed around an odor of wondrous sweetness; it was the only way in which it could deplore the departed!

But the wicked brother beheld the beautifully-blooming tree, took it for his own, and placed it in his sleeping-room beside his bed. The tree was lovely to behold; and its fragrance sweet and grateful. The

little Elf went with it, flew from one flower to the other, in each of which dwelt a little spirit; and to these he told how the young man had been murdered, whose beautiful curling locks lay under their roots; and he told them of the cruel brother, and of his poor sister.

"We know it!" said each spirit in the flower. "We know it! Have we not grown up from the shining hair of the dead? We know it!" And then they nodded their heads in a strange manner.

The Elf of the Rose could not comprehend how they could be so calm; and he flew to the bees that gather honey, and told them the history of the wicked brother; and the bees told it to their queen, who ordered that on the following morning they should kill the murderer.

But the night before,—it was the first night after the sister's death, when the brother was sleeping close beside the jasmine,—the chalice of every flower opened, and unseen, but armed with a poisonous sting, every spirit of the flower came forth,

and sat first at his ear, and sent such shocking dreams to his brain, as made him, for the first time, tremble at the deed he had done; and then they flew to his lips, and stung him in the tongue with their poisonous darts.

"Now we have avenged the dead!" said they; and flew back again into the bells of the white jasmine.

At daybreak, when the window of the sleeping-room was thrown open, in rushed the Elf of the Rose, with the queen, and the whole swarm of bees, to kill the murderer.

But he was dead already! Around the bed people were standing, who said, "The odor of the strong-scented jasmine has killed him!"

Then the Elf understood the vengeance of the flowers, and told it to the queen-bee; and she buzzed with her whole swarm around the flower-pot.

It was impossible to drive the bees away. Then a man took the flower-pot to carry it out; but one of the bees stung him in the

hand, so that he let it fall, and it was broken in pieces.

Then they all saw the beautiful hair of the murdered man, and so they knew that the dead man in the bed was a murderer.

The queen of the bees hummed about in the air, and sang of the vengeance of the flowers, of the Elf of the Rose; and that behind the very smallest leaf there dwelleth one who makes known every act of wickedness, and can avenge it.

Holger Danske.

IN Denmark is a very old castle, called Kronburg. It lies near the Sound, where large ships sail daily past by hundreds: English, and Russian, and Prussian ships. And they salute the old castle with their cannon,—"Boom!"

and the castle answers with its cannon,—"Boom!" for this is the way the cannons say, "Good morning," and "Much obliged to you."

But in winter no ships sail by; for the water is then all covered with ice as far as Sweden. It is quite like a highway. Danish and Swedish flags are waving there; and Danes and Swedes say to each other,—"Good morning!" and "Much obliged to you!" yet not with cannons, but with friendly shakes of the hand; and the one people go over to fetch wheaten bread and cracknel biscuits from the other; for we always like what we get abroad better than home-fare. But the most magnificent of the whole is, after all, the old Castle of Kronburg; and here it is that Holger Danske sleeps in the deep dark cellar, where no one even enters. He is clad in steel and iron, and rests his head on his stalwart arm; his long beard falls over the marble table, to which it has grown fast; he sleeps and dreams, but in his dream he sees all that is going on in Denmark. Every Christmas-eve

an angel comes and tells him that what he has dreamed is true, and that he may go to sleep again; for that Denmark is as yet in no real danger. But should it be so, old Holger Danske will arise, and the table will split in twain when he draws his beard towards him. He then advances and strikes a blow that is heard in all the countries of the world.

All this about Holger Danske was told by an old grandpapa to his little grandson; and the child knew that what grandpapa said was true. And while the old man told his story, he worked at a large figure of wood representing Holger Danske, which was intended for the figure-head of a ship; for the old grandfather was a carver, and made figures to be placed at the prows of vessels, according to their names: and here he had cut out Holger Danske, with his long beard and his slender figure, standing so proudly with his broad battle-sword in one hand, and the other resting on the arms of Denmark.

And the old grandfather told so many

things about remarkable Danish men and women, that at last his little grandchild thought he knew quite as much as Holger Danske could know, who, after all, only dreamed about the matter; and when the little fellow was in bed, he thought so much about it, that he quite pressed his chin upon the counterpane, and it seemed to him as if he had a long beard, and that the two were grown together.

The old grandfather remained sitting at his work, and was carving the last bit he had to do: it was the Danish arms. Now he had finished; and he looked at the whole, and thought of all he had read and heard, and of what he had told the little boy that evening; and he nodded and wiped his spectacles, put them on his nose again, and said,—"Yes, Holger Danske will hardly appear in my time. But the boy there in bed may get a sight of him, and be present when the great day comes." And then the old grandfather nodded; and the more he looked at his Holger Danske, the more clearly he saw that the figure he had made

was a good one; it almost seemed to him as if it had a color, and as though the armor grew bright like real steel and iron. The hearts of the Danish arms grew redder and redder, and the lions leaped up with crowns of gold upon their heads.

"That's the very finest coat-of-arms in the world," said the old man. "The lions denote strength, and the hearts love and clemency." And he looked at the uppermost lion, and thought of King Canute, who bound mighty England to the throne of Denmark; and he gazed at the second lion, and thought of Waldemar who collected the scattered states of Denmark and conquered the countries of the Vandals; he looked at the third lion, and thought of Margaret, who united Denmark, and Sweden, and Norway; but when he looked at the red hearts, they seemed more ruddy than before, —they grew into flames that moved, and he followed each one in thought.

The first flame led him to a narrow dark prison: there sat a captive—a noble woman, Eleonora Ulfeld, Christian the Fourth's

daughter; and the flame settled like a rose upon her bosom, and there it bloomed with her heart—with the heart of her, the best and noblest of all Danish women.

"Yes, that is one heart in the army of Denmark!" said the old grandfather.

And his thoughts followed the other flame, that led him upon the sea where the cannons thundered, and the ships lay enwrapped in smoke; and the flame fixed itself, like the ribbon of an order of knighthood, on the breast of Hvitfeldt, as, for the preservation of the fleet, he blew up himself and his ship.

And the third flame led him to Greenland's needy huts, where stood the pastor Hans Egede with love in his words and deeds. The flame was a star on his breast, a heart for the arms of Denmark; and the thoughts of the old grandfather preceded the buoyant flame, for he well knew where it would go to. In the humble room of the peasant woman stood Frederick the Sixth, and wrote his name with chalk on the rafters. The flame trembled on his breast,

trembled in his heart; in the room of the peasant his heart became a heart for Denmark's arms. And the old grandfather dried his eyes; for he had lived for King Frederick, with his venerable silver hair and honest blue eyes; he had known him too—and he folded his hands, and gazed silently before him. Then the old man's daughter-in-law came in, and said it was late; that it was time to leave off work, and that supper was ready.

"But what you have made is really quite beautiful, grandfather," said she. Holger Danske and our old arms complete! It seems to me that I have seen that face before!"

"No, that cannot well be," said the old grandfather. "But I have seen it, and have tried to carve it in wood from memory. It was when the English were lying in the roadstead, on the second of April, when we showed that we were true old Danes. On the 'Denmark,' when I was in the squadron under Steen Billes, a man stood beside me: it was as if the balls were afraid of him!

Merrily did he sing the old songs, and fired and fought as though he were more than human! I still remember his countenance; but whence he came, or whither he went, I know not. No one knows! I have often thought that it was old Holger Danske himself, who had swam down from Kronburg, and had aided in the hour of danger. That was my fancy, and there stands his likeness."

And the figure threw its large shadow quite high upon the wall, even on the ceiling; and it looked as if it were really Holger Danske himself that was standing there, for the shadow moved; but that might be because the flame of the lamp did not burn steadily. And the daughter-in-law kissed the old grandfather, and drew him towards the great arm-chair before the table; and she and her husband, who was, of course, the son of the old man, and the father of the little boy lying in bed, ate their evening meal; and the old grandfather told about the Danish lion and the Danish hearts; told them about strength and gentleness. And

he explained, quite distinctly, that there is another strength, besides that which lies in the sword; and he pointed to the shelf where old books were lying, where the collected comedies of Holberg were; books which had been read and re-read, so amusing were they: you fancied that all the persons in them were known to you since many a-day.

"Look you! he could use his chisel too," said the grandfather. "What was false and cross-grained in people, he chiselled away as well as he could!" And the old man gave a nod of his head in the direction of the looking-glass, in which was struck the calendar, with "the Round Tower" on the cover; and he said, "Tycho Brahe, too, was one of those who used the sword—not to hew into flesh and blood, but to clear a more distinct path between all the stars of heaven! And then he, whose father was of my craft, the old sculptor's son; he with the white hair and strong shoulders, whom we ourselves have read about; he, in short, who is talked of in all the countries of

the world*—ah, he could work in stone; I can only carve in wood! Yes, yes, Holger Danske can come in many ways, in order that one may hear of Denmark's power in all parts of the world!"

But the little boy in bed saw distinctly the old castle of Kronburg and the Sound, and the real Holger Danske, who sat deep under the earth, with his beard grown fast to the marble table, dreaming of all that is going on above. Holger Danske dreamed, too, of the little humble room where the carver sat; he heard all that was spoken, nodded in his dream, and said:

"Yes, remember me, ye Danish people! Give thought unto me. I will come in the hour of need!"

And the bright day shone in brilliancy outside the castle of Kronburg, and the wind bore the sounds of the hunter's horn across from the neighboring land; the ships sailed by, and saluted, "Boom, Boom!"

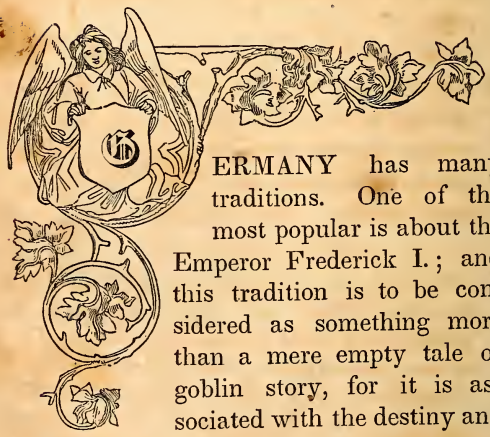
* Thorwaldsen.

And from Kronburg came the answer, 'Boom, Boom!"

But Holger Danske did not awake, let them fire as loud as they may; for you know, it was only "Good day," and "Very much obliged," that they said. There must be a different sort of firing before he will awake; but awake he is sure to do, for strength and power dwell in Holger Danske.

The Emperor Frederic Barbarossa.

A CHAPTER BY THE TRANSLATOR.*



GERMANY has many traditions. One of the most popular is about the Emperor Frederick I.; and this tradition is to be considered as something more than a mere empty tale or goblin story, for it is associated with the destiny and the hopes of a whole people.

* Those children for whom I have translated these

Well, this mighty Emperor, this "greatest hero of the Christian world," who, while he reigned, strove incessantly to make the German empire what it once had been, is said to be still alive.

It is said that he sits spell-bound in the Kyfhauser mountain; and that the spell will not be broken until the day of judgment, unless his country should be in the dreadest need.

He has taken with him the jewels of the empire, and they stand beside him on a marble table. His fiery beard, which still grows during his enchanted sleep, must reach three times round the table before he will awake. As yet, however, it goes

Tales—may not, perhaps, know that there is more than one tradition very similar to that of Holger Danske, to be found in Germany, relating, of course, to those monarchs who, while living, called forth the admiration of their country. The most popular one is about Frederic Barbarossa, who—but as what I am going to tell you would make rather a long note, I have concluded to give the German emperor a chapter to himself.—C. B.

round but twice. His sword is in his hand in readiness, and he waits till his day shall come.

Some shepherds, 'tis said, have seen him, and he has asked, "Do the ravens still fly round the mountain?" and when answered in the affirmative, he has again rested his head upon his hand, and said, "Then I must sleep for another hundred years!"

And why, you will ask, should the people think that he is still alive? Because the nation could not bring themselves to believe, that the great monarch who for near forty years had ruled as German Emperor; who had gone forth with his tens—ay, with his hundreds—of thousands of soldiers to battle—that he, the noble, the magnanimous, the indomitable Emperor, who had made the restoration of the German empire, as it had once been, the aim of his whole life, could possibly have left them forever. When, I say, his astounded people were told that he was no more—that they would never again behold his glorious countenance;

when they saw the Crusaders coming back from the struggle with the Infidel, and missed the chief who had led them forth in power; when asking for him, they were told he lay entombed at Antioch,—then all were struck dumb with amazement, and men knew not what to think.

The Holy Land was a far distant country, around which was mystery. The eager questioners about the circumstances of their hero's death heard various accounts; and when men began to wake from their bewilderment, they whispered to each other doubts of what they had been told—doubts of his being really dead! They forgot his mortal nature, and remembered him only as what to their minds he had ever been,—as a guiding spirit, sent on earth by Heaven for the accomplishment of some great destiny.

Could he, then, have ceased to be? Could he have left them thus suddenly, far from his own native land? The more they pondered, the stronger grew the pleasing hope that he was still with his people, and that

when the day should arrive for the fulfilment of his darling scheme, he would certainly come forth again, and lead his chosen to victory. And in this thought they found consolation. From a hope it became a certainty, and henceforth they clung to this creation of their fancy with all the devotedness of veneration and of love.

Thus we see that the tradition in question is not a tale invented for mere amusement's sake, but rather the visible form which the cherished feeling of a whole people has taken in expressing itself—the tangible shape assumed by the hopes and longings of the nation in giving themselves vent.

It is true such a belief could hardly spring up now; but this, you must remember, was in days six hundred years ago. Many circumstances have happened since to make men's minds different to what they then were. There is no probability of such a tradition becoming prevalent about Napoleon.

Though many a veteran may have stood lost in thought beside his tomb, and have wished the while it were possible for his General to hear the tramp of the thousands as they marched near his resting-place, or that the drum's long rolling could reach him in his coffin; though, too, the fanciful wish may have been imparted to some trusty comrade, old soldier like himself, yet it would never be spoken of as a thing that might be.

Many a one even has most assuredly seen, in his mind's eye, the well-known figure of his Emperor standing, as it were, before him, and with all the reality of life, while dwelling on some vividly-remembered event of past days. Nevertheless, we are sure to hear no tradition of the Emperor going his rounds beneath the dome of the Invalides, while still watching over the destinies of France. Men's minds are changed.

You must know, too, that the desire of Barbarossa to re-establish the holy Roman Empire under one head, makes his memory

especially dear to Germany; for there even now men talk of its fulfilment: not. indeed, as an event likely to be accomplished, but as one most ardently to be desired. Still many a heart beats quicker at the mention of such a state of things; there are many still, who, like Barbarossa, view this as the grandest aim of all human striving.

Can we wonder, then, that the Germans love to dwell on this pleasing vision, connected as it is with so much that is dear to their countrymen? It is like a shadow falling on the stream of time, but the event that casts the shade is behind them, out of sight, and beyond their reach.

The most natural spot for the abode of such a sleeper would be some mountain solitude. Childhood is always poetical; and I do not doubt that those of my young readers who have stood on the dreary heights of Westmoreland, or amid the still grander mountain scenery of the Continent, will have felt its influence, and without being cowards, have experienced a sort of dread at the awful stillness around them.

There is nothing there to disturb the slumberer; not a sound is heard of man or beast; for not a creature comes up into that realm of dreariness: the very rocks seem spell-bound, and lying in an enchanted sleep.

The Dying Child.

TRANSLATED BY MARY HOWITT.

MOTHER, I'm tired, and I would fain be sleeping;
Let me repose upon thy bosom seek;
But promise me that thou wilt leave off weeping,
Because thy tears fall hot upon my cheek.
Here it is cold: the tempest raveth madly;
But in my dreams all is so wondrous bright.
I see the angel-children smiling gladly,
When from my weary eyes I shut out light.

Mother, one stands beside me now! and, listen!
Dost thou not hear the music's sweet accord?
See how his white wings beautifully glisten!
Surely those wings were given him by our Lord!

The Dying Child.

Green, gold and red are floating all around me:
They are the flowers the angel scattereth.
Shall I have also wings whilst life has bound me?
Or, mother, are they given alone in death?

Why dost thou clasp me as if I were going?
Why dost thou press thy cheek thus unto mine?
Thy cheek is hot, and yet thy tears are flowing:
I will, dear mother, will be always thine!
Do not sigh thus—it marreth my reposing;
And, if thou weep, then I must weep with thee?
Oh, I am tired—my weary eyes are closing:
—Look, mother, look! the angel kisseth me!